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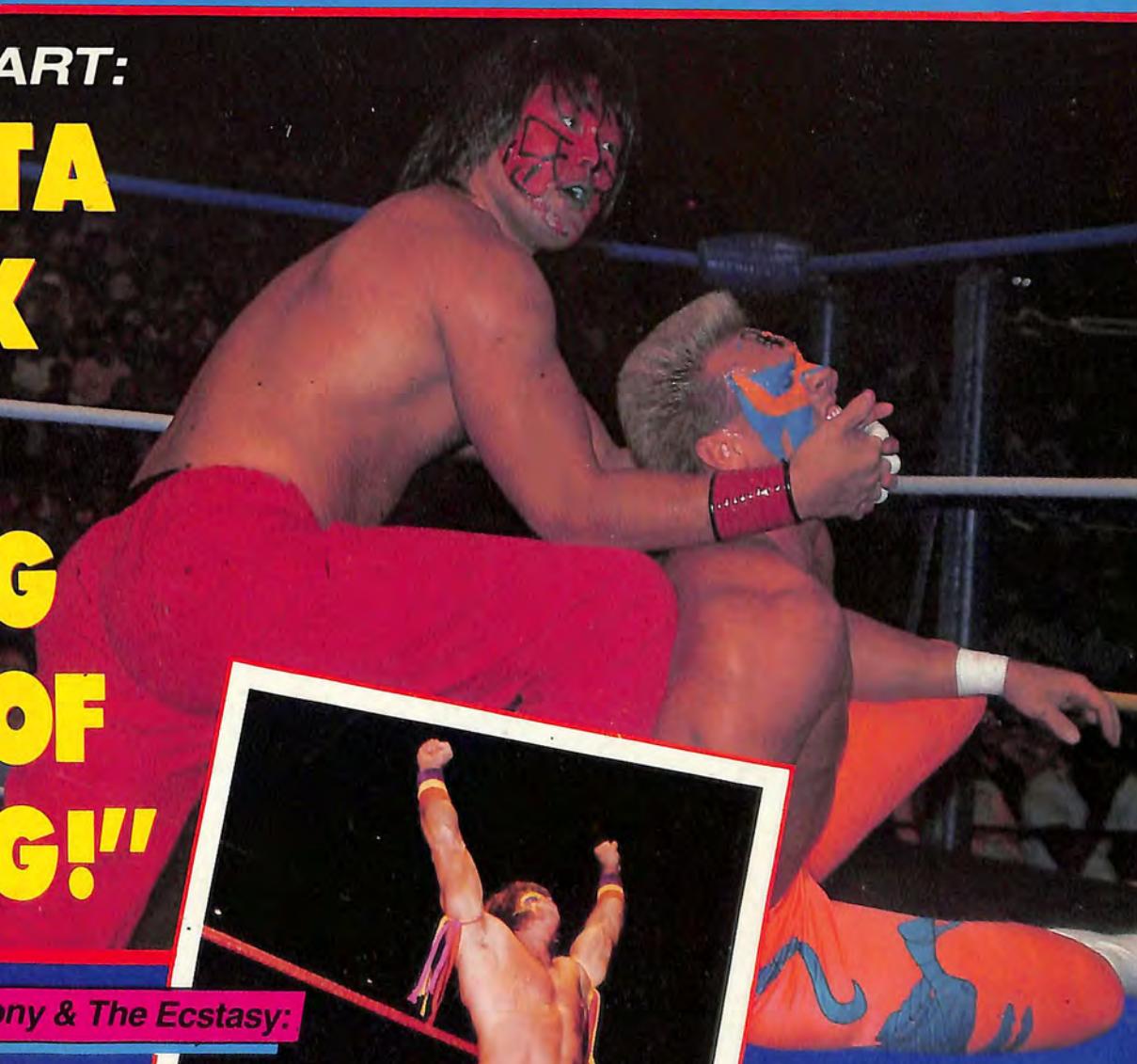
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THE Wrestler

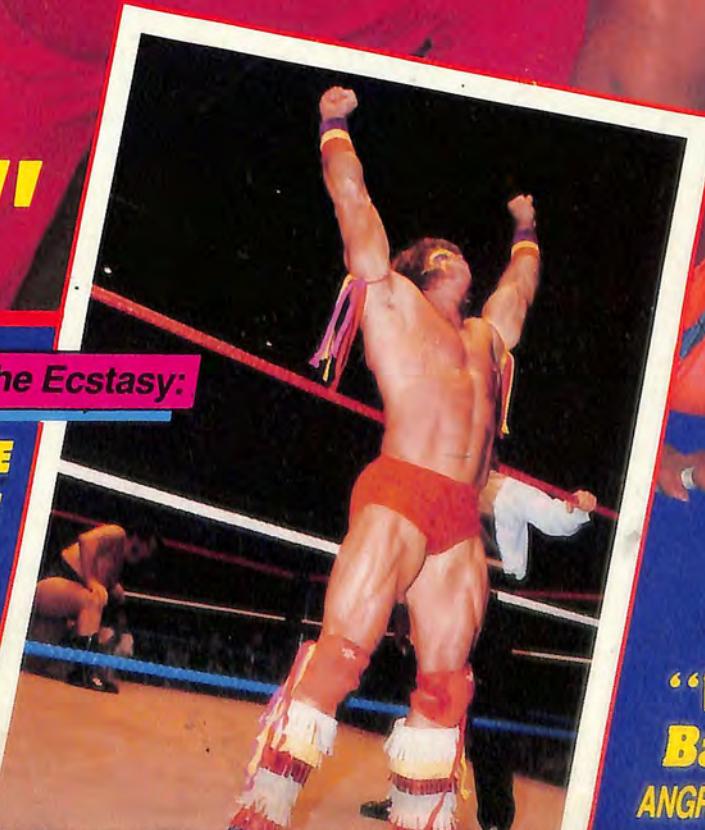
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**Memo To
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THE Wrestler

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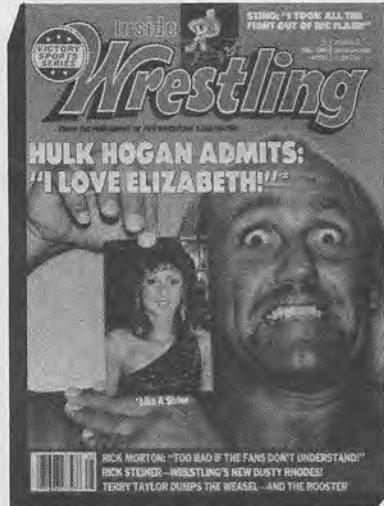
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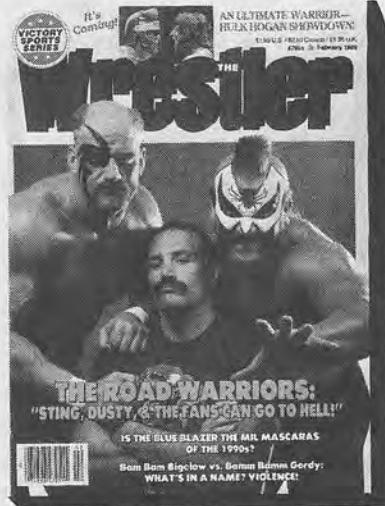
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YOUR LETTERS

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A BRAINIAC

Why do you guys keep putting Bobby "The Brain" Heenan on your mostly superb "Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down" list? Heenan, who is probably the best manager in wrestling today, now is enjoying his best days in the WWF. Not only was Rick Rude the Intercontinental champion, not only does he have his own show (the best part of *Prime Time Wrestling*, by the way), but the former NWA (National Wimp Alliance) tag team champions, Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard—The Brain Busters—have won the WWF tag team championship belts for their greatest victory ever.

Heenan doesn't just sit at ringside; no, he's a manager who gets involved in his wrestlers' matches. Thumbs up to The Brain Busters, Rick Rude, and Heenan. You deserve it.

ROY LUCIER
Garden Grove, CA

SORRY, LIZ

I couldn't believe my eyes when I read "Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down" in your September 1989 issue. You gave Elizabeth a thumbs up for leaving Randy Savage. You wrote that Elizabeth had had enough of Savage's roughhouse tactics and that she sent a message to all women:



Elizabeth keeps a close eye on Randy Savage. Although Elizabeth received a "thumbs up" for leaving Savage, reader Christine Poniatowski would hardly call her courageous.

Don't allow men to bully you.

Elizabeth a courageous woman? Give me a break! If she really was courageous, she would have left Savage back in 1986!

CHRISTINE PONIATOWSKI
Forest Park, IL

FROM DOWN UNDER

Your magazine is one of the best wrestling magazines there is, but I think you should have more of Eddie Ellner's columns and more stories on Australia's greatest wrestler, Bill Dundee, and less on Dusty Rhodes.



Bill Dundee still has a lot of fans in his native Australia. Among them is reader Travis Murphy, who laments the lack of wrestling on television down under.

I don't know how some people can complain because on some NWA TV programs the show ends before the end of the match. In Australia, we don't even get to see the NWA, AWA, or World Class. As of August 8, we hadn't even seen WrestleMania V, and if we want to watch the WWF, we have to stay up until 1 a.m.

TRAVIS MURPHY
Melbourne, Australia

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Boy, you guys sure are idiots! I used to think you knew a lot about wrestling, but since reading a couple of recent issues, I see that you know nothing about the sport. Here are some of the completely ridiculous statements you have made:

You wrote that The Honky Tonk Man "is not even close to being on the list of contenders for Hulk Hogan's World title." If that's so, then why did Honky Tonk recently battle Hogan for the belt on *Saturday Night's Main Event*? Don't blame it on the WWF's weird ratings system; you just plain outright didn't know what you were doing.

Second, what's with all the wres-

ting maneuver name changes? Spinecrusher, spine stretcher, spinebreaker: That's three different names you folks made up for the same move! The correct name for the so-called "spinebreaker" is "atomic drop."

TED BURRITT
West Palm Beach, FL

COMEBACK KIDS

When wrestling fans look back on the year 1989, it may well be remembered as the year of the comeback.

Many felt the career of Dusty Rhodes was drawing to a close when he was forced to give up the U.S. championship in 1988. Instead, he rebounded to win the PWF title, and has now established himself as a major force in the WWF.

Terry Funk returned to the NWA with a vengeance, taking Ric Flair to the limit in a determined bid to wear the gold once again.

Ken Patera and Brad Rheingans, both toiling in relative obscurity for the past few years, joined together to capture the AWA tag team title.

It's always exciting to follow the progress of rising young stars like Jeff Jarrett and Brian Pillman. It is also nice to know that some of the veterans can still get in there and show the others how it's done.

JIM BRADLEY
Jackson, NJ

HORSEMEN RIDE AGAIN?

In your article "Blanchard, Anderson, Windham, And ???—Is J.J. Dillon Rebuilding The Four Horsemen In The WWF?" you speculated about who might become the fourth Horseman. I don't think it will be Ted DiBiase. The Horsemen revolved around Ric Flair, and in order for them to regroup successfully, they'll have to have someone with the influence and charisma Flair has. DiBiase doesn't fit the bill.

I had a horrible thought. What if the Horsemen try to recruit Hulk Hogan? He was once a rulebreaker, and the Horsemen might try to woo him back to his former ways. Besides, who else in the WWF has the



Terry Funk prepares to piledrive Rick Steiner. Reader Jim Bradley admires the way a veteran like Funk has remained in contention for the NWA World title.

charisma of Ric Flair and a world title to boot?

Hogan has even been named on Dusty Rhodes' hit list. Both Hogan and Dusty have huge egos, and Rhodes is the archenemy of the Horsemen. Need I say more?

TIM H. MOSS
Ervin, NC

DRAGON FLY

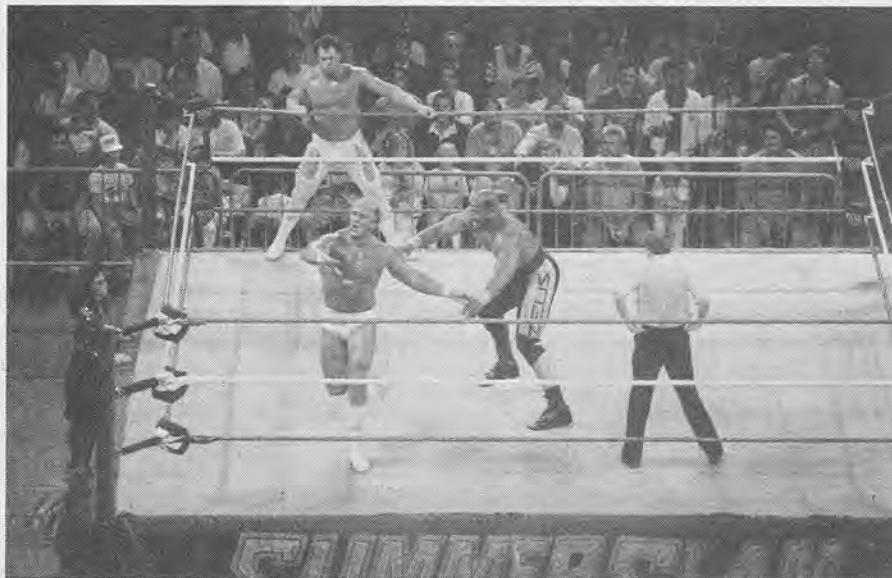
I was saddened to hear that Rick Steamboat has left the NWA. By coming back and winning the NWA title this year, he proved that he is certainly one of the sport's biggest stars. He has a lot of unfinished business with Lex Luger that I'd like to see him settle.

However, I am heartened to know that he has "retired" twice before and still come back. Hopefully this will happen again. Steamboat has a lot of outstanding wrestling left in him. I realize he would like to spend more time with Ricky Jr., but he's still too young to retire. Wrestlers 10 years his senior remain active and in championship contention.

(Continued on page 44)

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

By BILL APTER



Zeus whips Hulk Hogan across the ring during the main event at SummerSlam '89. Hogan and Brutus Beefcake won the eagerly anticipated encounter with Zeus and Randy Savage when the "Hulkster" pinned Zeus, shattering the myth of his invincibility.

ONCE AGAIN, WWF World champion **Hulk Hogan** proved why he is the number-one man in this sport. Coming back from a huge disadvantage, he and **Brutus Beefcake** teamed to defeat **Randy Savage** and **Zeus** at SummerSlam '89 on August 28 at the Byrne Meadowlands Arena in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

It appeared that Savage had found the perfect partner for crippling Hogan: the 6'10", 343-pound Zeus, dubbed the "Human Wreck-

ing Machine." But Zeus was convincingly pinned by the WWF World champion to end this wild main event.

Zeus completely dominated the opening minutes of the match and shut off all of Hogan's attempts at mounting an offense. But with 14 minutes expired, Hogan finally staggered Zeus with several blows to the head and a clothesline. Meanwhile, "Sensational" Sherri, Savage's manager, tried to toss Zeus her loaded pocketbook, but

Elizabeth, who surprised the fans by aiding Hogan and Beefcake at ringside, tripped Sherri, sending her hurtling over the top rope.

Savage grabbed the purse and climbed to the top turnbuckle, but Beefcake pushed him off. The pocketbook ended up in the hands of Hogan, who belted Zeus, legdropped him, and pinned him at 15:13. After the pin, Hogan delivered a brutal atomic spinecrusher to Sherri. She flew toward Elizabeth, who knocked Sherri unconscious with the purse. Beefcake and Elizabeth then cut off Sherri's ponytail, much to the delight of the sellout crowd.

In other matches, **The Ultimate Warrior** regained the Intercontinental title after gorilla-pressing **Rick Rude** and pinning him at the 16:07 mark. The Warrior was aided in this match by **Roddy Piper**, who came out to ringside to distract Rude . . . **The Brain Busters** defeated **The Hart Foundation** . . . **Dusty Rhodes** pinned **The Honky Tonk Man** . . . **Curt Hennig** beat **Terry Taylor** . . . **Rick Martel** and **The Rougeau Brothers** defeated **The Rockers** and **Tito Santana** in a wild six-man tag match . . . **Dino Bravo**

(Continued on page 48)

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FLORIDA IN August is one of the last places I expected to be, but there I was, a guest of Al Perez at his house in Tampa. I don't know Perez very well, but he chose a reporter at random because there were a few things he wanted to get off his chest.

"You people don't know what to make of me," Perez asserted. "I take Skandor Akbar's money and you call me a vicious rulebreaker. I wrestle on my own in Florida and you call me a fan favorite. Either make up your minds or don't plaster me with useless labels."

In the NWA, Perez was a top contender for the U.S. and TV titles but decided to leave the federation for a variety of reasons he doesn't want to discuss. His manager there, Gary Hart, has called him several times in an effort to get him to return, but he balks.

"I don't care about the NWA right now," Perez said. "Nobody there interests me. Flair? Sure, I could beat him, but what would that prove? Luger and Sting would be pretty decent matchups, but of course certain victories. I'm looking for challenges in other places."

After Perez came down to Florida, it didn't take him long to win the state title from Mike Graham. His scientific and brawling skills were as sharp as they'd ever been as he defended the belt throughout the Sunshine State. When

WIN LOSE OR DRAW

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

Perez lost the title to Dustin Rhodes on May 23, he had what was for him a perfectly acceptable explanation.

"Cheating. How else can you explain a Rhodes winning the belt from me?"

Now, Perez divides his time be-

tween Texas and Florida. When he ventured to Texas, he intended to honor the fans and stick with scientific wrestling. But he was lured away from his good intentions by a contract offered by Gen. Skandor Akbar.

"If his man is willing to pay me all that money, how can I not do what he asks?" is Perez' justification for the move.

Normally, the story would end there. Another wrestler gone bad. But with Perez it's different. Whenever he returns to Florida, Perez' ears ring with cheers, and he enjoys the

admiration.

"The people here appreciate me for what I am," he says. "They respect my talents. They know I'm just tryin' to do the best I can and they see that I'm willing to fight anybody the promoters will put me in there with. They're smart enough to forget all those stupid labels you pin on me."

I asked Perez how Akbar and, just as importantly, Hart felt about this.

"Listen, Akbar pays me to get the job done in Texas," Perez responded. "What I do in Florida is of little concern to him. He has kindly agreed not to interfere in my affairs here. As for Gary, he's too busy in the NWA to care and that's fine with me. The only topic of his phone calls is whether I'll return to the NWA. That's it."

(Continued on page 52)



Al Perez expects—and receives—no encouragement from the Texas fans as he engages Mil Mascaras in a test of strength.



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HERE'S BEEN A lot of nostalgia this summer, and I have to admit that I've been caught up in it as well. Unlike most people, I'm not longing for the Woodstock concert, the first moon walk, or the world champion New York Mets, though. Instead, I've been fondly recalling the summer of 1969 because that was when I saw my first live wrestling card.

And it was during that event that I witnessed a most remarkable match. It was only the opening bout, but the impact it had on me was enormous. It was at a dingy upstate New York arena with about 500 other fans that I saw Manuel Soto take on Pete Sanchez. Both of these scientific wrestlers were young and hungry, and they went at it ferociously for more than 20 minutes. Both men displayed a high degree of scientific brilliance, but it was the way the match ended that has stayed with me all my life.

Both wrestlers were battling near the ropes when Sanchez accidentally delivered a low blow to Soto's solar plexus. Writhing in pain and unable to defend himself, Soto fell out of the ring. The referee counted Soto out and awarded the match to Sanchez—but amazingly, Sanchez would not allow the referee to raise his hand. Instead, he asked for the ring microphone.

"I can't win a match like this," Sanchez told the crowd. "I accidentally hit Manny with a low blow. I decline the victory and give it to Soto."

With that, the referee raised Soto's hand. Sanchez and Soto hugged each other, and the crowd responded with a standing ovation. It was one of the most sportsmanlike acts I've ever seen, and it proved to me that fan favorites would never accept a victory that wasn't crystal clear.

Oh, how times have changed. As I write this, I've just finished viewing SummerSlam '89, and I can safely report that we're all a long way from the summer of love. Even today's fan favorites have changed. Today, wrestlers will do *anything* to win, especially in the WWF. There isn't a Sanchez in the bunch.

The fans exploded in adulation when Hogan pinned Zeus at SummerSlam to win the tag team main event, but it was the way he did it that bothered me. Could Hogan have pinned the massive 343-pound Zeus without the help of Sherri Martel's loaded pocketbook? Hogan didn't care. The fans didn't care, even when he delivered a brutal atomic spinecrusher to Martel, a maneuver that could've crippled her for life. All that mattered was that Hogan won, no matter the means.

The undercard was no better. The Ultimate Warrior recaptured the Intercontinental title from Rick Rude—thanks to outside-the-ring antics by Roddy Piper. Ted DiBiase beat Jimmy Snuka by countout—thanks to outside interference from Virgil. Dusty Rhodes pinned The Honky Tonk Man—thanks to some botched shenanigans from Jimmy Hart, who accidentally clubbed Honky with his own guitar.

While SummerSlam as a whole was exciting, the wealth of disputed decisions and outside interference—even on the part of supposed fan favorites—bothered me immensely. In 1969, fan favorites were supposed to be above using cheap tricks in order to win matches. Today, wrestling is much more popular than it was then, which means the stakes are higher and the payoffs for winning matches are bigger. Wrestlers will do anything, no matter how illegal, to win matches. Even men like Hogan, Rhodes, and the Warrior aren't above using tactics that only a few years ago, with stricter rule enforcement, would've gotten them suspended for life.

In 1969, fan favorites like Sanchez had a high moral code. In 1989, fan favorites like Hogan use loaded pocketbooks and beat up women—and the fans love it.

No wonder I long for the good old days. □



Manuel Soto vs. Pete Sanchez

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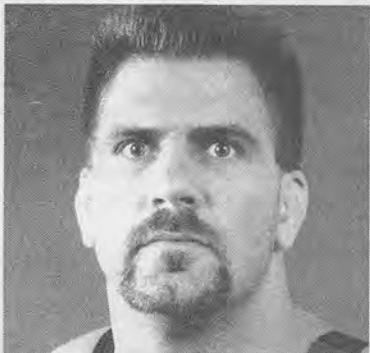
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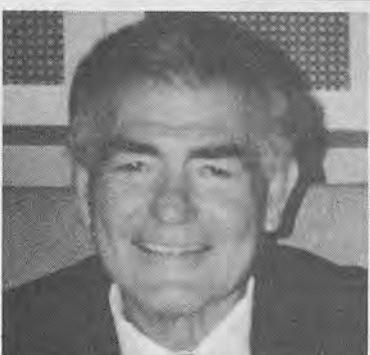
Each issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.



Thumbs Up to Terry Gordy. We hate to see him leave—Gordy, despite his penchant for rulebreaking, is an exciting wrestler—but Bamm Bamm made the right move by returning to Japan. First of all, he'll take a shot at All-Japan International, United National, and Pacific Wrestling Federation champ Genichiro Tenryu. Second, he and Stan Hansen will have the opportunity to defend their All-Japan International tag belts. But most importantly, Gordy is temporarily free of his so-called teammates Michael Hayes and Jim Garvin. These men have done nothing but take advantage of Gordy, who deserves better.



Thumbs Up to Nikita Koloff. Bouncing back after tragedy is perhaps the hardest thing a man can do. It makes returning to the ring after a serious injury look easy. And, so sadly, Nikita suffered the greatest tragedy when his young wife, Mandy, died of cancer earlier in the year. The heartbreak Nikita suffered is impossible for us to fathom. We sometimes wonder how he is able to go on. But life *does* go on, and somehow Nikita is back in the ring, pursuing his second love once again. He has displayed more courage than we could ever imagine, and our hearts go out to him.



Thumbs Up to Joe Blanchard. There's havoc in the AWA. Larry Zbyszko continues to defend his World title in a devious manner. The World tag team belts have been held up amid controversy. And the president of the federation, Blanchard, is a rookie. Amazingly, however, he's held up under incredible pressure. Johnny Valiant threatened to pull Mike Enos and Wayne Bloom out of the AWA if they weren't give the tag belts. Blanchard said, "Let 'em leave." Zbyszko tries to duck challengers. Blanchard said, "You'll wrestle who I tell you to." Eventually, order will be restored to the AWA. Blanchard will be the reason.



Thumbs Up to Antonio Inoki. Congratulations to the Japanese wrestling legend on his successful run for office in Japan. Inoki was recently elected to the Japanese House of Councilors—the equivalent of the U.S. House of Representatives—on a platform of world peace through sports. To us, it makes sense. If countries can cooperate in sports, there's no reason why they can't cooperate in more important areas. Inoki, of course, has always been a worldwide ambassador of wrestling. We can't think of a wrestler more qualified for public office.

Thumbs Down



Thumbs Down to Johnny Valiant. In a high-pressure move that bordered on blackmail, Johnny Valiant—manager of Mike Enos and Wayne Bloom—threatened to pull his team out of the AWA unless they were given the World tag team belts. Valiant's "request" stemmed from the incident in which the belts were held up after a match between Ken Patera and Baron Von Raschke, the champs, and his Destruction Crew. In this incident, Valiant clearly brought a foreign object into the ring. If any team has a right to the belts, it's Patera and Von Raschke. And the AWA should take Valiant up on his offer: Let 'em leave!



Thumbs Down to Rick Steiner. Wrestlers often bring their personal lives into play. They also often bring their animals to the ring. Steiner is guilty on both counts. On several occasions, Steiner has brought one of his many dogs to ringside. Now he's bringing his girlfriend, Robin Green, to ringside, too. We don't know what Steiner's purpose is. We do know that he's getting distracted. We also know that Missy Hyatt doesn't appreciate her presence. And if Robin gets hurt, it will be Steiner's fault.



Thumbs Down to Ronald Gossett. The big, fat fiend is at it again. When Gossett won a match against CWA promoter Eddie Marlin, he also won the right to designate the card for a TV taping and a Mid-South Coliseum show. Well, as expected, Gossett was up to no good. He designed several matches so that his enemies were at decided disadvantages (The Rock 'n' Roll Express, for example, wrestled four of Gossett's men) and even refereed a few matches. The result, of course, was an absolute sham. It proved nothing, except that Gossett will go through any means to achieve his devious ends.



Thumbs Down to Roddy Piper. Fact: Rick Rude was in a position to put away Ultimate Warrior at SummerSlam '89. Fact: Rude put himself into this position without any help from manager Bobby Heenan or any other illegal action. Fact: Piper came to ringside during the match because he had a personal ax to grind with Rude. Is there any reason why Piper couldn't have chosen a more appropriate time to settle his differences with Rude? Did he have to interfere in an important Intercontinental title match? Maybe the Warrior would have come back and won on his own. We'll never know. The I-C belt has been tarnished. □

CORRESPONDENTS

REPORTS

Montreal, Quebec (Correspondent—Anne Charron): The Fabulous Rougeaus entered the ring amidst boos and jeers from their hometown crowd. The Rockers stormed the ring, sending both Rougeaus and the referee to the arena floor. Once all four men were back in the ring, the bell sounded to start the one-hour time-limit marathon match. The team with the most pinfalls earned within the hour would be declared the winner.

The Rougeaus started a game of "monkey see, monkey do." Jacques did a flip-up from the mat, and Marty Jannetty copied. Then Raymond did a springing handstand over the top rope from outside the ring apron. Again, The Rockers copied. Shawn Michaels then did a standing backflip from the top turnbuckle.

As chants of "chicken!" raced through the crowd, Raymond climbed up on the turnbuckle, shook his head, and stepped down. When Jacques tried the move, the Rockers shook the ropes, causing Jacques to fall on the ropes crotch-first.

The Rougeaus won the first two falls. There were already 48 minutes gone when The Rockers took the third fall. With three minutes left, The Rockers tied the match at two falls apiece. The



The Rougeaus double their efforts against Rocker Marty Jannetty. These two high-flying teams have been engaged in an enthralling series of matches across the U.S. and Canada. Thus far, The Rockers are enjoying the edge.

time limit expired just as Michaels had Jacques pinned, so the bout went into overtime.

Jannetty had Raymond caught in a small package, but Jacques reversed it so that Raymond was on top. But Michaels snuck in and reversed it back, enabling Jannetty to pin Raymond.

In other bouts: Ultimate Warrior pinned Andre the Giant ... Dino Bravo defeated Jim Neidhart ... The Bushwhackers beat The Powers of Pain by countout ...

Dusty Rhodes beat Big Bossman ... Barry Windham defeated Paul Roma ... Tim Horner beat Richard Charland.

Charleston, WV (Correspondent—Eric Perkins): Sting and The Great Muta squared off in a bout to determine a new NWA TV champion after the title has been held up in Baltimore.

The first 10 minutes of this fast-paced match were filled with aeri-

(Continued on page 46)

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Q: "My question is for Rick Morton: Are you ever going to return to the NWA? If you do, will you bring your cousin, Todd Morton, with you?"—Andy Williams, High Point, NC

A: "Son, I surely had some good times in the NWA," Morton said. "Me and Robby Gibson won four World tag titles there. But there's a lot to be done in the CWA. Those Blackbirds want a piece of me and Robert and we gotta be thinking about fightin' them off. Then there's this other team, Wildside.



Although Rick Morton occasionally wrestles with Robert Gibson in The Rock 'n' Roll Express, he's spent more time recently teaming with his cousin, Todd Morton.

Those boys think they can make a name for themselves by messin' with The Rock 'n' Roll Express. No way that'll happen! As for Todd, he's been a great partner. If I ever do go back to the NWA, he'll do what he wants to do. He doesn't have to follow me anywhere."

* * *

Q: "My question is for Verne Gagne: Do you feel that your son, Greg, would be better off wrestling in the NWA or WWF? He probably feels

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Greg Gagne has a leglock on AWA champion Larry Zbyszko. Gagne's desire to capture that belt, which his father Verne wore proudly for so many years, has kept him in the AWA.

more pressure trying to follow in your giant footsteps trying to win the AWA belt."—Wendell Blackett, South Milton, PEI

A: Verne Gagne responded, "Greg is a veteran of this sport. The only pressure he puts upon himself comes from his enormous desire to succeed. Sure, he must think about my accomplishments, but I've al-

ways told him to follow his own path. I haven't tried to control his career. As for those other federations, I don't think you'll find any competition better than in the AWA. I doubt that Greg would be interested in wrestling elsewhere."

* * *

Q: "My question is for Sting: Why did you help Ric Flair at the Baltimore Great American Bash?"—Dianne Hicks, Decatur, GA

A: "When Terry Funk and The Great Muta started beating up Flair, my blood started to boil!" Sting said. "It just wasn't fair. I knew I had to do something, even though Flair and I had a big feud last year. Now me and Rick are together and Muta and Funk are in trouble. I want to be World champion someday, but at this point I'm not gonna push Flair for a match. Right now we're a team and we're on a mission."

Q: "My question is for the 'Total Package' Lex Luger: You've said that when you were abiding by the rules and pleasing the fans, it got you nowhere. But as a fan favorite, you won the NWA tag team title and the U.S. championship."—Joe Mason, Lake Carmel, NY

(Continued on page 47)

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INTRODUCING SCOTT NORTON

Photos by Bruce Kreitzman



POWER. THOSE WHO don't have it want it. Those who have it try to increase it. In recent years, wrestlers have become bigger and stronger than they've ever been before. While most young wrestlers have to spend enormous amounts of time in gymnasiums to develop their bodies into huge masses of muscle, Scott "Flash" Norton has never had to work quite that hard. To him, size and strength have always come naturally.

"I guess I was just born big," said the huge 6'3", 360-pound rookie who is currently riding an impressive undefeated streak in the AWA. "I don't have a flashy bodybuilder's physique like Lex Luger or The Ultimate Warrior, but I've got the kind of power that's taken me right to the top in anything I've ever tried. I'm a lot stronger than either of those guys!"

From most fledgling pro grapplers, such comments would be considered shocking, but when one considers what Norton has accomplished, they're not quite so hard to believe. Norton is already world famous as an undefeated arm-wrestler; he holds more than 30 titles in that sport. He's also the reigning super-heavyweight arm-wrestling champion after winning that title in a tournament in

(Continued on page 60)

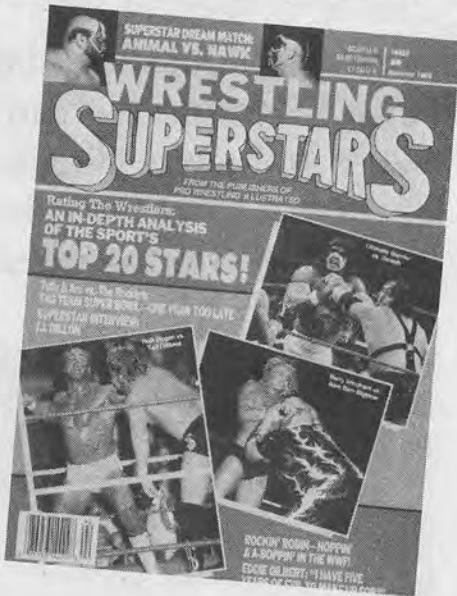
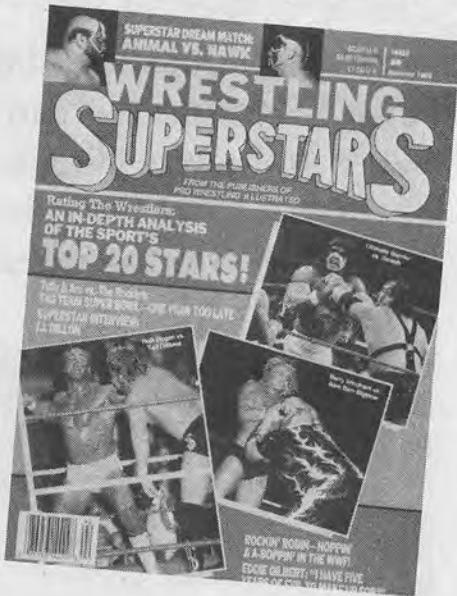
No opponent has ever been able to defeat Scott "Flash" Norton on the arm-wrestling table. Now, Norton has begun his pro wrestling career, and with his incredible strength and massive size, it's quite possible that he could be just as successful in his second sport

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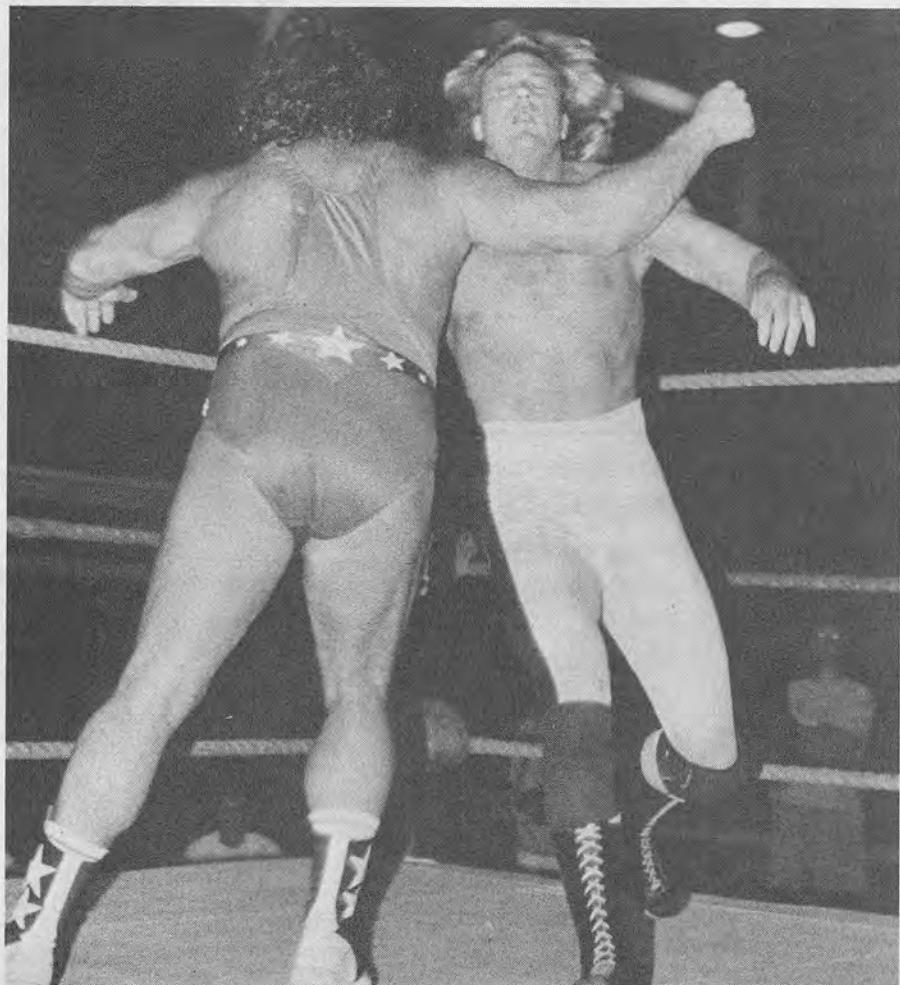
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Q&A

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Ken Patera stops a charging Wayne Bloom in his tracks with a devastating clothesline. Bloom and his partner, Mike Enos, known collectively as The Destruction Crew, have gone out of their way to make life miserable for Patera.

Q: Ken, I'm sorry to see that your AWA World title belt has been taken away from you. I realize how much you valued that championship. . .

A: This is ridiculous! It's absolutely crazy! I've been in this sport for 16 years, and I've never seen anything like this. How can [AWA President] Joe Blanchard allow this stuff to go on like it has? Doesn't anybody review videotape? Doesn't anyone listen to the fans? Who the hell is running this organization?

Q: My goodness! I don't think I've seen you rant and rave like this since your rulebreaking days in the WWF during the early part of this decade.

A: (*Calming himself*) I'm sorry, Bob. It's just that I'm having trouble accepting a lot of things that have been going on in the AWA lately. For the life of me, I can't understand why Enos, Bloom, and that worthless Valiant weren't all suspended months ago. They suckered me into that car-lifting contest when all along they knew it was all a ruse to get me and Brad into a vulnerable position. They attacked us and ripped us up pretty good, and what did the AWA do? They mandated a fine, that's what. A measly \$5,000! Brad was hurt so bad that he *still* hasn't recovered. In retrospect, I guess I should be happy that they didn't strip us of the title. Blanchard was at least fair

KEN PATERA



FOR THE FIRST time since March, Ken Patera is a man without a belt. He hasn't been pinned, and he hasn't submitted. Instead, the former Olympian has been a victim of yet another AWA controversy—and of the latest chicanery by The Destruction Crew. For some reason, Wayne Bloom and Mike Enos and their manager, Johnny Valiant, have dogged Patera's every move since they first formed their team during the spring. In May, Bloom and Enos attacked Patera and Brad Rheingans, the AWA World tag team champions, during a car-lifting challenge. Rheingans suffered the worst of the attack, sustaining serious shoulder and knee injuries that have put his career on hold ever since.

The AWA allowed Patera to continue defending the tag title with alternate partners. On August 18 in St. Cloud, Minnesota, Patera selected veteran Baron Von Raschke as his partner in a title defense against Enos and Bloom. After an intense battle, the titles were held up because of a dispute over which team brought a foreign object into the ring. Patera is now twice as angry as ever, because he's now twice been burned by Valiant and his men.

Assistant Editor Bob Smith traveled to Minneapolis to speak with a seething Patera about his plans for regaining the AWA tag team title.

enough to let me continue to hold it with any partner I wanted.

Q: That's true, but you ended up being stripped of the title, anyway. In your mind, what was the reason why the match in St. Cloud was stopped?

A: You should ask Johnny Valiant. He's the one that hit Baron with that foreign object he brought into the ring. DeRusha didn't see it, naturally, until after Baron grabbed it and hit Valiant and that big goon Bloom with it. Then, DeRusha had the unmitigated gall to think that Baron or I brought that piece of steel into the ring. When was the last time you saw me use a foreign object, Bob?

Q: That's a good question. I don't think I've ever seen you use one, even back in your rulebreaking days.

A: That's right. You never have. So why would DeRusha think in a thousand years that me and Baron would start stooping to those kind of tactics now? He eventually let the match continue, but after that the entire match went to hell. After they finally got all of us separated, the AWA decided to strip me and Baron of the belts. Those are some just desserts, eh? Valiant brings a foreign object into the ring, and then I have to pay the price for it. It just doesn't make any sense to me at all.

Q: Another thing that doesn't seem to



Patera puts the pressure on Enos' rotator cuff with a well-placed knee.

make a lot of sense is the way Enos and Bloom seem to have singled you out for elimination. What did you do to get those guys so angry with you?

A: It's a clear-cut case of professional

jealousy. Bloom and Enos are a couple of young rulebreakers that are just starting out, and they're real anxious to make a reputation for themselves. They see me with my AWA World tag team belt and



AWA World champion Larry Zbyszko is the next victim of the Patera clothesline. Because of Patera's publicized problems with The Destruction Crew, there are those who don't think he has a desire for the World title ...

my Olympic medals, and they just go crazy with jealousy. Hey, I ought to know—I used to act the same way those guys do now back in my early years. It really has a lot to do with that louse Valiant. Back when I was a rulebreaker, I listened to everything that Lou Albano and The Grand Wizard used to tell me. They were veterans in this sport, and I thought they had all the answers. As it turned out, I was wrong. Now I see Bloom and Enos doing the same thing with Valiant now, but it hasn't gotten them very far, has it?

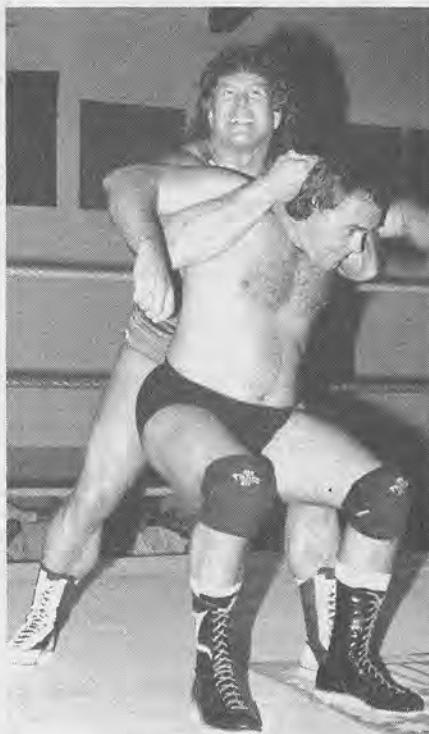
Q: Perhaps it's true that they haven't been able to win many important matches yet, but they've gained quite a reputation for themselves as cripplers. They've managed to retire Wahoo McDaniel, and it looks like they may have done the same to Brad. And lately, they've been claiming they're going to put you out of action, too.

A: Good! Let 'em try. I've seen the kind of tactics these guys will use, so I've armed myself with some of the best partners a guy could ever have. I've already used the Baron,

big Scott Norton, Paul Diamond, and Tommy Jammer as my partners against them, and I haven't been hurt too badly yet, have I? Those guys succeeded in hurting people only because nobody knew what to expect from them. Now, the whole world knows the kind of nastiness that Bloom and Enos are capable of, so I think their days of injuring people have come to a grinding halt.

Q: How do you feel about Bloom's claim that he's a stronger man than you are?

A: Now he's *really* barking up the wrong tree. He thinks he's hot stuff because he supposedly deadlifted 821 pounds, but I won't believe it until I see it with my own



... but Zbyszko knows. The self-proclaimed "Living Legend" found himself the victim of a Patera swinging neckbreaker, but saved his title by kicking the referee.

eyes. Don't forget, I was the first man to lift 500 pounds over his head in sanctioned amateur competition. My weightlifting records are right there in the record book for everyone to see. I don't see Wayne Bloom's name listed anywhere, so as far as I'm concerned, all his claims don't mean a thing. And besides, that car-lifting challenge

was supposed to be my chance to prove I'm a stronger man than he is, but he never gave me the chance to lift the car, did he? That's because he knew I could beat him hands down.

Q: Another man that the fans think you could beat is Larry Zbyszko, the AWA World champion. Do you have any designs on that title?

A: Sure I do. In reality, I should be the champion right now! I had a match against Zbyszko in Bloomington, Minnesota, in July, and it was another example of what's been going wrong with the AWA lately. I had Zbyszko locked in my swinging neckbreaker, and the guy was screaming in pain. The guy was totally helpless to escape, so what does he do? He kicked the referee, Tom Burton, who immediately disqualified him.

Again, I was ripped off royally.

Q: But what can you do about it?

A: I've already talked extensively with Blanchard, and he knows exactly how I feel. I really think that Burton, DeRusha, and the rest of the referees have been anxious to make an impression with the new president, and because of that they've been a little bit too rigid in enforcing the rules. I mean, Burton



Bloom, trapped in a Patera headlock, has not yet felt the worst of the veteran's wrath.

could've let that match with Zbyszko continue if he really wanted it to. In calling for the bell when he did, Burton deprived me of a chance to win a World title.

Q: So you would have preferred that DeRusha would have let the tag team match continue as well?

A: Absolutely. Neither team cared that all four of us were battling in the ring at once. The fans didn't care, either. Why couldn't DeRusha have just gotten the foreign object out of the ring and let us all battle it out until someone got pinned? To me, that would have been the most logical solution. Instead, the AWA is drowning in a sea of red tape. Men like The Destruction Crew, Valiant, and Zbyszko get away with every rule infraction in the book, but it's good men like myself, Wahoo, and Brad that end up paying the price. Blanchard claims that he wants the AWA to be the place where rules are strictly enforced, but so far the efforts of him and his referees have only led to total confusion.

Q: So what happens now? It looks like you're bound to get a rematch against Bloom and Enos, at least. Will you continue to use Von Raschke as your partner?

A: Maybe so, maybe not. The Baron did a great job during that match, and he's proven to be a man I can trust. But the situation I'd really like is to get Brad back and healthy. Then, the team that won the title could prove to the AWA that we're worthy World champions. When Brad and I beat Bad Company for the belts back in March, it was one of the greatest moments of my career, because it came after a lot of people had written me off after I left the WWF. Now, I've got to retrace my steps to get those belts back, and I'm not happy about it. Enos and Bloom had better be at their best, because I'm gonna take my frustrations out on them. And who knows? Maybe my days of crippling aren't over! □

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Wrestler SPOT LIGHTS...

From time to time, *The Wrestler* will shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. These are unforgettable highlights of the sport's greatest stars, compiled by the largest staff of editors and photographers in wrestling journalism

LARRY ZBYSZKO

WHEN LARRY ZBYSZKO made his pro debut in 1972 as the protege of WWF World champion Bruno Sammartino, he seemed headed for a successful career as one of the most popular men in the sport. But while Zbyszko has been successful, controversy and hatred have been his trademarks.

The current AWA World champion gave first hints to his imminent success when he was voted *Rookie of the Year* in 1974. But while he gained a reputation as an outstanding scientific wrestler, Zbyszko couldn't escape Sammartino's shadow.

In late 1977, Zbyszko and teammate Tony Garea lost to Toru Tanaka and Mr. Fuji in the final round of a tournament for the WWF World tag team title. But a little more than a year later, on November 21, 1978, Zbyszko and Garea defeated The Yukon Lumberjacks for the WWF tag belts.

That was the first of many major titles Zbyszko would win throughout his career. He is, in fact, one of the few men in history to have won a major title in the WWF, AWA, and NWA.

But the turning point of Zbyszko's career occurred in 1979, when he attacked Sammartino on WWF TV. The Zbyszko-Sammartino feud, one of the hottest in WWF history, culminated on August 8 in New York's Shea Stadium, where they engaged in a brutal cage match. To this day, Sammartino harbors intense hatred for Zbyszko.



AWA champion Larry Zbyszko is a fine wrestler, but his title reign has been marred by controversy and cheating. The veteran has piled up many titles in his career.

And Zbyszko, apparently in an effort to infuriate his former mentor, calls himself "The Living Legend."

Since that day in 1979, Zbyszko has left behind a trail of blood and hatred. He became one of the most hated men in the old Georgia area, and actually tried to buy the National title for

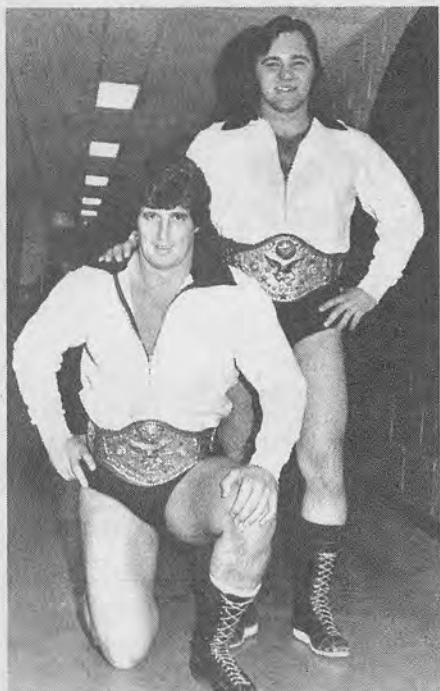
\$25,000 from Killer Brooks on March 20, 1983. The NWA, however, ruled the transaction illegal.

Zbyszko's greatest impact has been in the AWA. He feuded with Sgt. Slaughter for the Americas title in 1985, and suffered one of his greatest embarrassments when he eventually lost the belt to Slaughter. Then, in 1987, Zbyszko helped Curt Hennig win the World title from Nick Bockwinkel by handing him a roll of coins at ring-side. The AWA review board ruled that Zbyszko didn't illegally help Hennig, although videotapes appeared to show otherwise. Bockwinkel was so outraged by the incident that he targeted Zbyszko, not Hennig, for revenge.

Later that year, Zbyszko moved to the NWA, and in January 1988, won the Western States title from Barry Windham. But Zbyszko was all but ignored in the NWA and decided to return to the AWA. His timing couldn't have been better. The World title was stripped from Jerry Lawler, who missed several mandatory defenses, and a battle royal for the belt was held. On February 7, 1989, in St. Paul, Minnesota, Zbyszko won his first world heavyweight title.

As expected, he has not conducted himself well as champion. Zbyszko has ducked challengers. He often gets himself disqualified. And he is anything but an ambassador for the AWA.

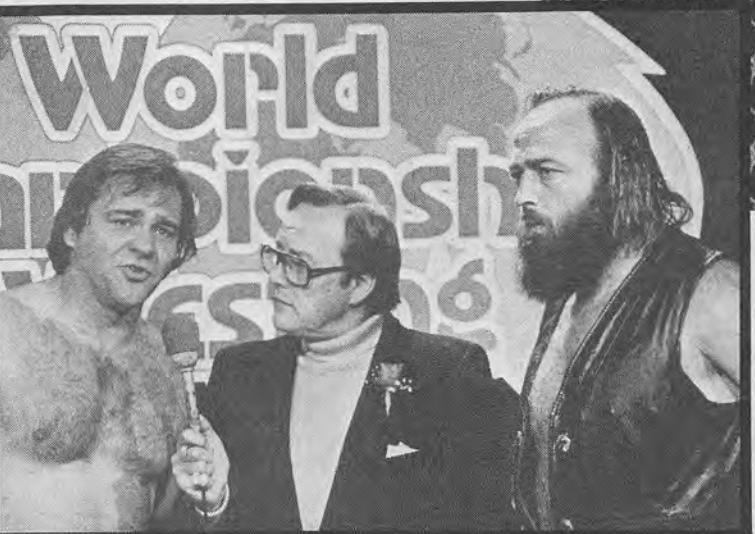
But Zbyszko is successful. As a new decade dawns, it's likely that his success will continue. □



November 1978: Zbyszko and Tony Garea wear the WWF tag team belts they won from The Yukon Lumberjacks (above). August 1980: Zbyszko attempts to escape from Bruno Sammartino in their classic cage match (right).



March 1983: Zbyszko tells a national television audience that he has bought the National title from Killer Brooks (left). April 1989: The self-proclaimed "Living Legend" armlocks Sgt. Slaughter (bottom left).

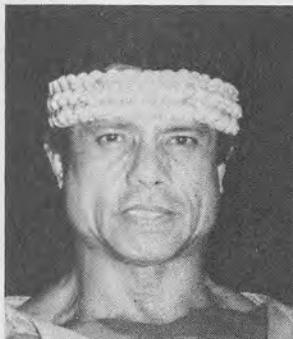


January 1988: Zbyszko chinlocks Barry Windham in a match for the Western States title, which Zbyszko later won (left). February 1989: Larry blasts Tom Zenk on his way to the AWA World title (above).

THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

RAY

of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal

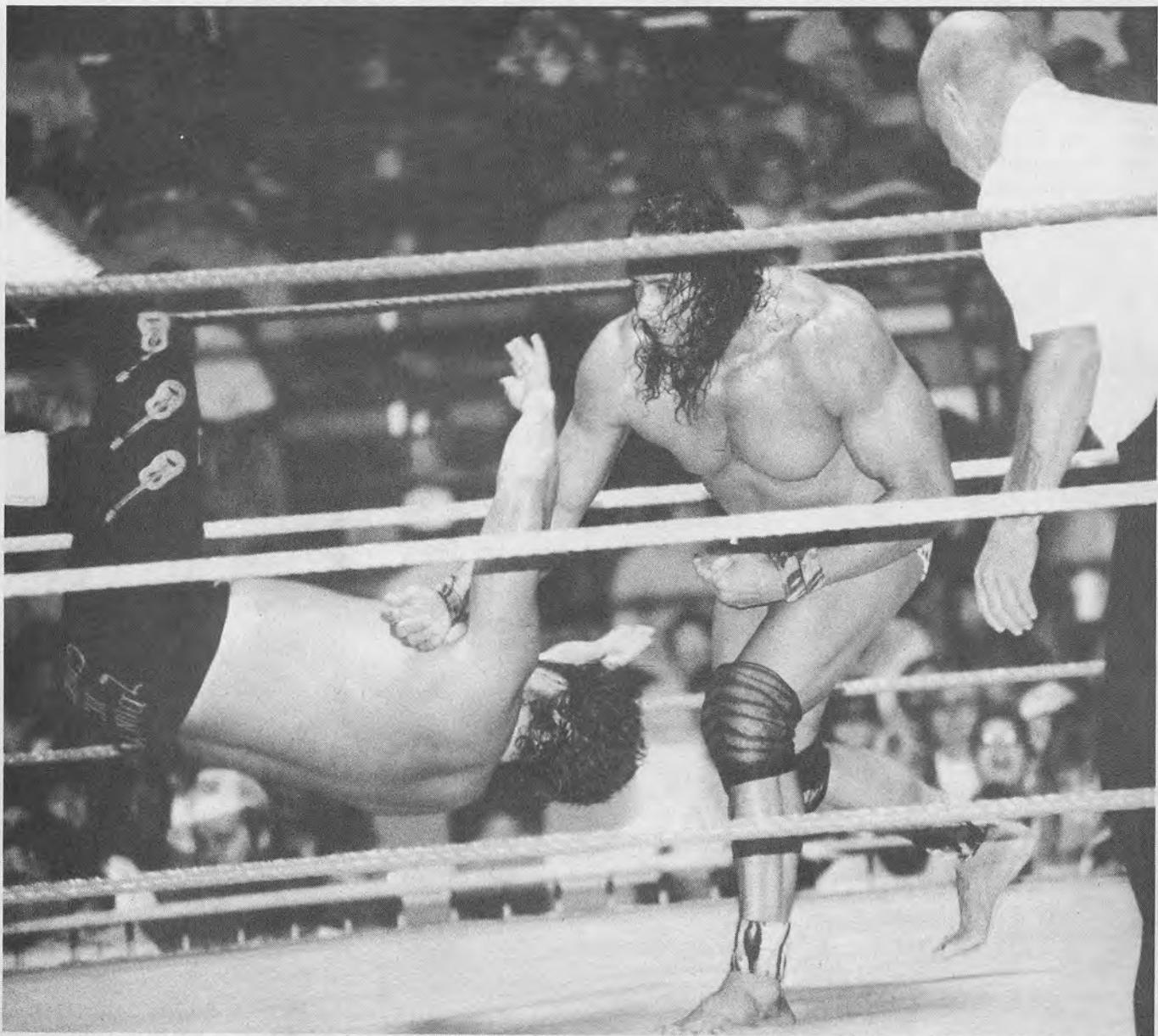


JIMMY SNUKA

Each month

THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer their candid opinions of one

youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



Jimmy Snuka (hiptossing The Honky Tonk Man) is one of the most respected wrestlers of the last 15 years. Even a few years past his prime, "The Superfly" still combines speed and power like few others in this sport.



CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"Yeah, I managed Jimmy in the WWF back in the early '80s. Yeah, we got into one of the most vicious feuds I've ever been in. And, yeah, it was one of the biggest black marks of my career. After he left my leadership, Snuka became one of the biggest stars this sport has ever seen. Looking back on it, he proved he did the right thing. I was an evil man in those days, and I was taking him for every cent he had. He did a hell of a lot better without me!"

Capt. Lou Albano, long known as "The Guiding Light," has guided 13 tag teams to an unmatched 16 WWF World tag team titles.



KILLER KOWALSKI

"What a rulebreaker this guy once was! Everybody knows the fan favorite Snuka they see now, but I remember the brutal version that teamed with Ray Stevens to win the NWA World tag team title back in 1980. Those two were sheer perfection. Stevens was an eye-gouging veteran, while Jimmy would torture his opponents by leaping onto them with abandon. Today's Snuka is a pale imitation of the man he used to be. He was *much* better 10 years ago."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rule-breakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.



PROF. TORU TANAKA

"This Snuka has done quite well when making grappling forays into Japan, so that speaks volumes about his skills in the squared circle. The public considers him a legend here in the United States as well, but I have serious doubts about him. Why is it that you never see Snuka with a title belt around his waist? It must be because he lacks the courage to succeed on the highest possible level. That makes him no better than an also-ran."

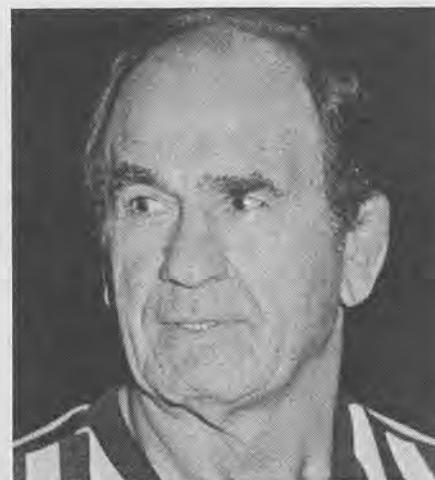
Prof. Tanaka, a three-time co-holder of the WWF World tag team title with Mr. Fuji, is currently a successful actor.



LARRY HENNIG

"I remember when Snuka came to the AWA a few years ago. My boy, Curt, was also there at the same time. He teamed up with Jimmy a couple of times, but he could never get really close to the guy. Seemed like Snuka was the type to try to hog the whole show during their matches. Now Snuka is back in the WWF, but he'll never last. Why? Because before long he's going to have to face 'Mr. Perfect'. That illiterate savage will never get out of the ring alive."

Larry "The Ax" Hennig is a four-time former AWA World tag team champion; he held three of those titles with Harley Race.



LOU THESZ

"When Snuka became a fan favorite back in 1982, I feared that he may have only been going through a phase. Thankfully, he's never let anyone down since then. He's one of the most incredibly gifted athletes I've ever seen. He really does his homework. His 'superfly' leap from the top turnbuckle may be the most devastating maneuver I've ever seen. It's most admirable that he knows how to deliver it without crippling his opponents. He's a credit to the game."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-around wrestler in history.



JACK BRISCO

"This guy was awesome 15 years ago, and he's still great now. Snuka is one of the few athletes who has been blessed with the ability to do it all. He's got strength, he's got blazing speed, and he knows more holds than people give him credit for. Add to that one of the most competitive demeanors I've ever seen from a professional athlete, and you've got a truly great competitor. I think Snuka could easily win a singles title in the WWF—and I'd bet that he will."

Jack Brisco is a two-time former NWA World champion, and a three-time former NWA World tag team champion with brother Jerry.

Memo To Teddy Long:

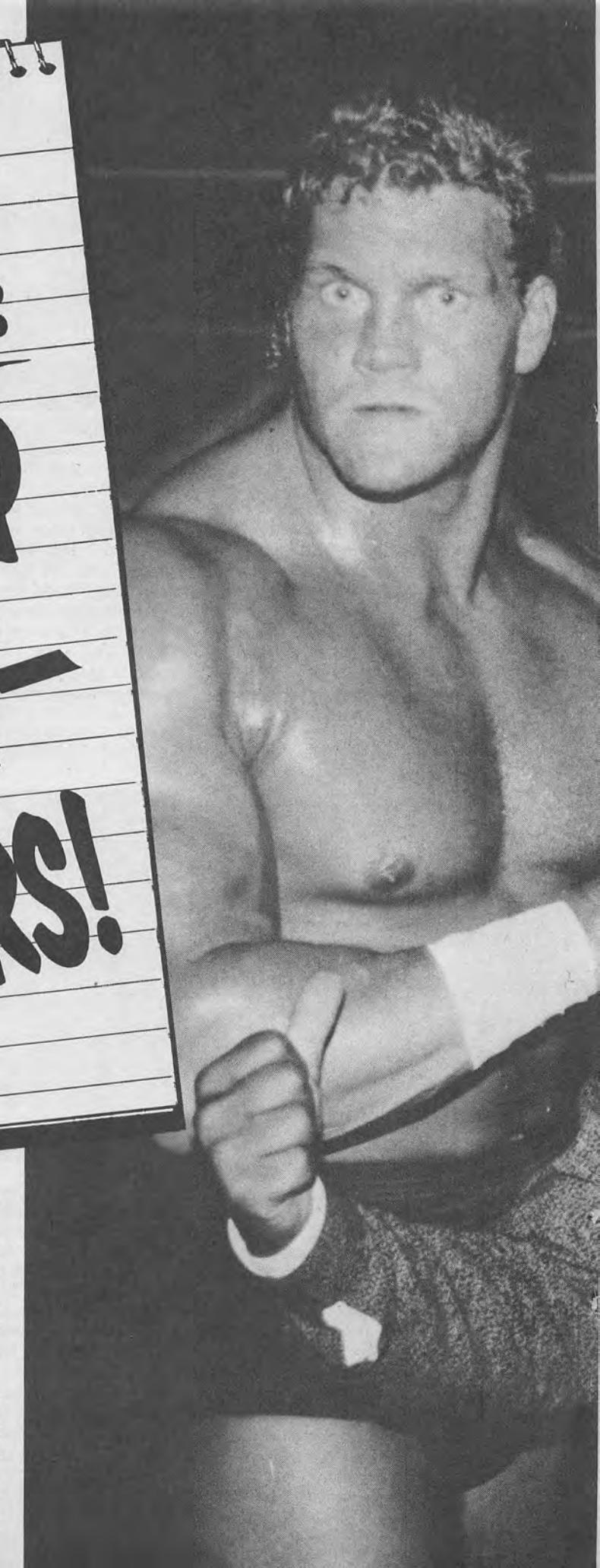
BREAK UP THE SKY- SCRAPERS!

By Dave Rosenbaum

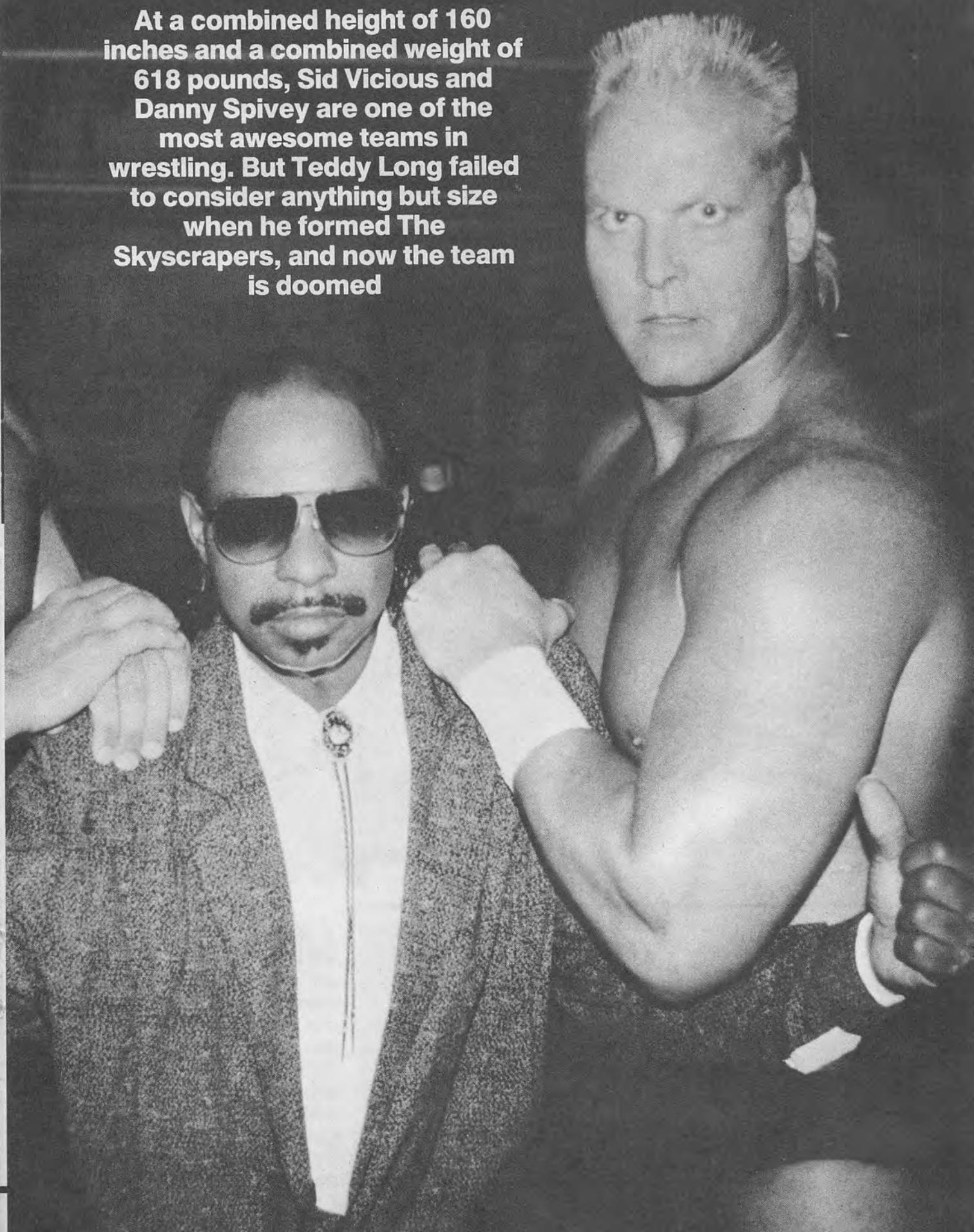
TEDDY LONG'S RECIPE for an NWA World tag team title seemed to make sense: mix 6'8", 318-pound up-and-comer Sid Vicious with 6'8", 300-pound veteran Danny Spivey, two ingredients that contained everything needed for success: power, desire, hunger, and youth.

But it was, in fact, an outsider's misconception of the sport that guided Long in the formation of his stable (the recent addition, and expected subtraction, of Norman the Lunatic was perhaps his ghastliest

(Continued on page 50)



At a combined height of 160 inches and a combined weight of 618 pounds, Sid Vicious and Danny Spivey are one of the most awesome teams in wrestling. But Teddy Long failed to consider anything but size when he formed The Skyscrapers, and now the team is doomed



The Agony & The Ecstasy:



The feud between Andre the Giant and The Ultimate Warrior figured to be one of the greatest of 1989. But the Warrior has destroyed the Giant in every meeting, leaving many to wonder, "What's wrong with Andre?"

By Craig Peters

MANY FANS REGARDED the feud between Andre the Giant and Ultimate Warrior as the main course on a gourmet summer menu of WWF wrestling. For the Warrior, it's been a feast that's given the Giant constant indigestion. In a pattern that has repeated itself with astonishing and alarming regularity, the Warrior has made mincemeat of Andre, pinning him in city after city.

ANDRE & ULTIMATE WARRIOR AT THE CROSSROADS

But what's most astonishing—and quite unbelievable—is the swiftness of the Warrior's domination: Most matches have ended in less than a minute. What is responsible for the sudden and inexplicable onesidedness? Can it be a case of Warrior virtuosity? Or is it that Andre's skills have quietly diminished since last year? Or a combination of both?

The Streak. Never in the history of professional sports has there been anything like The Streak. The UCLA basketball team won 88 consecutive games over three seasons. Lou Gehrig stayed in the New York Yankees' lineup for 14 straight years without missing a game. The Montreal Canadiens compiled a streak of five straight Stanley Cups.

But none compare to the winning streak of Andre the Giant. The others are streaks, admirable in their length, worthy of plaudits, respect, and perhaps a smattering of awe. Andre's was a STREAK, an aberration, an irrational accumulation of victories. Andre did not lose; not once, not ever.

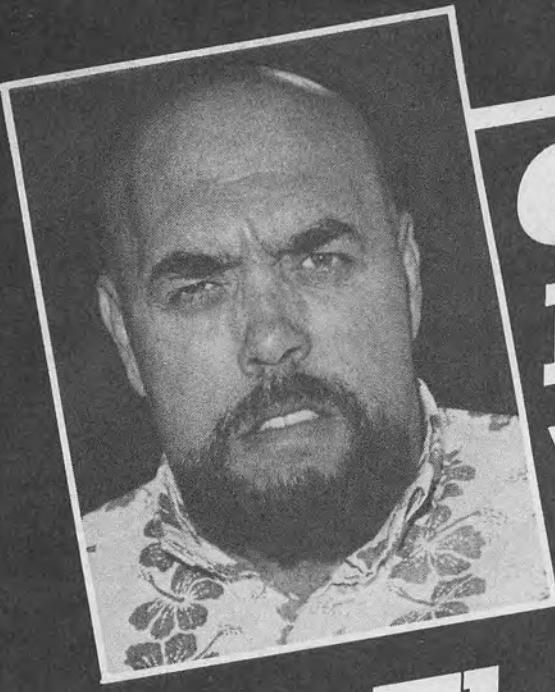
A man 7'5", 497 pounds should not lose, you say. But don't forget The Streak, covering nearly 3,000 matches, included nights Andre wrestled injured, wrestled in the afternoon and night, wrestled in handicap matches against five opponents, and wrestled killers very nearly his size: Killer Kowalski, Don Leo Jonathan, John Studd.

It took a valiant effort by Hulk Hogan at WrestleMania III to end
(Continued on page 54)



The Ultimate Warrior clotheslines Andre the Giant (above) and bounds off the ropes for another shot at his foe (below). The Warrior has piled up a lot of surprisingly quick victories over Andre.



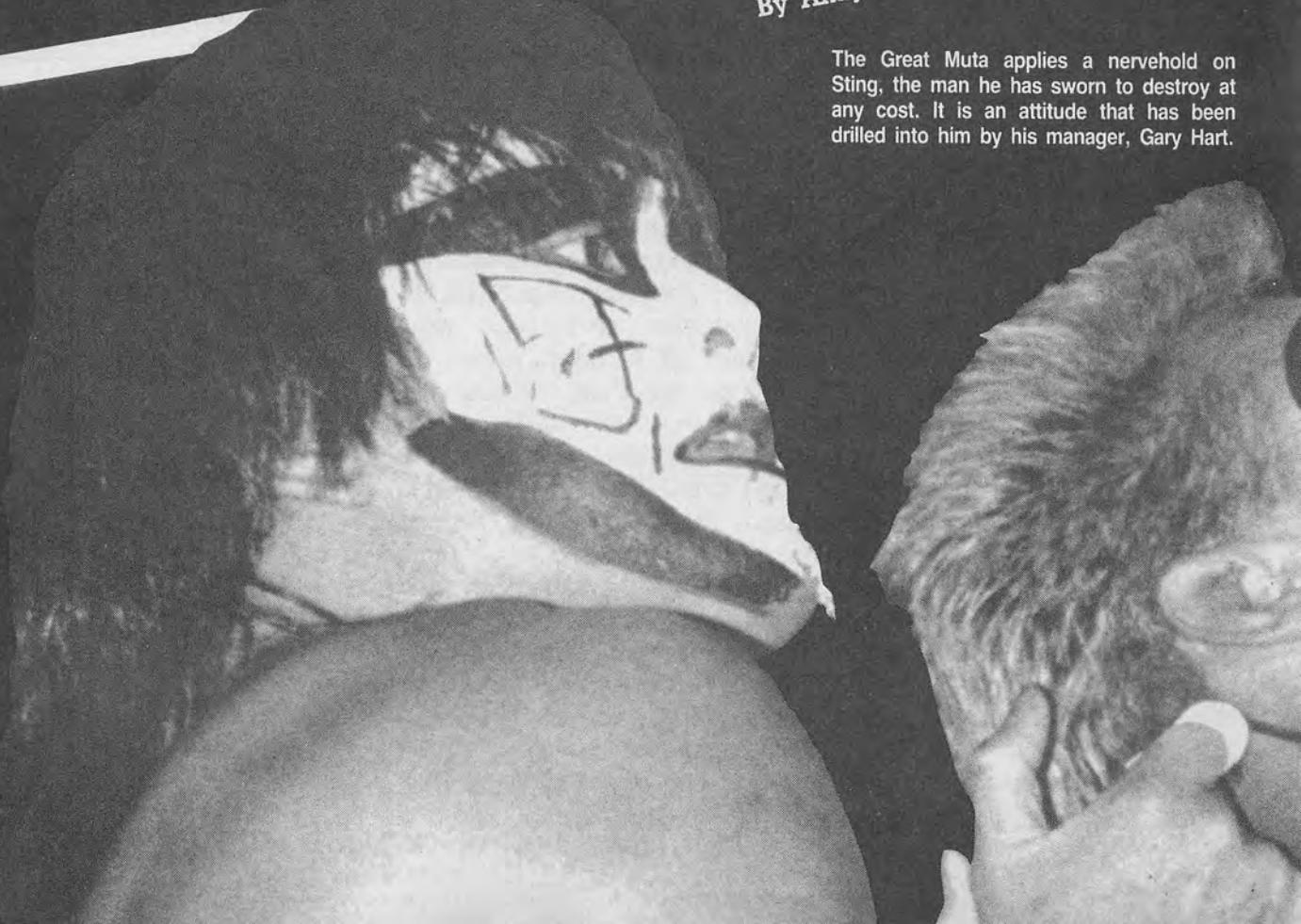


**GARY
HART:**

**"Muta
Took The Sting Out Of
Sting!"**

By Andy Rodriguez

The Great Muta applies a nervehold on Sting, the man he has sworn to destroy at any cost. It is an attitude that has been drilled into him by his manager, Gary Hart.





Wealthy, good-looking, and American: Sting is the possessor of all the qualities that The Great Muta despises. According to Muta's manager, Gary Hart, it is merely a matter of time before his man obliterates the growing Sting legend

THE WEIGHTS HAD barely hit the ground and Sting was already propelling himself up the Gravitron, the sleek new hydraulic pull-up machine reminiscent of Star Trek technology. Fifty repetitions later, awed spectators watched as the wrestler took a pair of 40-pound dumbbells on the exercise bike with him. Thirty min-

utes of riding would precede a 10,000-meter swim, by which time Sting would be finished with the first of his three daily workouts.

When this information was relayed, via interpreter, to the Great Muta, the Japanese wrestler's usually impassive countenance broke into a big American-like grin. "This man, this insect, this Sting-thing," Muta spoke through the interpreter. "He is not worthy to be considered as man. He is something less than human."

If the language barrier prevented Muta from conveying the great contempt he held for Sting, it didn't quite inconvenience Muta's bombastic manager, Gary Hart.

"It's quite revealing that Sting prides himself on being one of the best trained and conditioned athletes in the world," Hart said, "yet in the ring with Muta he appears as he really is: a slow, lethargic, barely alive mass of blob and bones. It's quite funny, don't you agree?"

Sting, for one, doesn't appreciate the humor. "We all know Hart is a parasite," Sting said, speaking for the hundreds of wrestlers Hart has fed off throughout his infamous career. "It worries me that he now controls someone as dangerous as Muta. For some reason Muta believes everything Hart tells him. It's a shame to see all that talent become polluted. I think a good ol' fashioned American butt-kicking will teach Muta some real lessons—and teach him to respect the country that pays his rent."

"Uh, for Mr. Sting's information, I pay Muta's rent," a very relaxed Gary Hart rejoined. Who can fault the manager for his complacency? Not since the Kevin Von Erich-Chris Adams feud captured front page headlines has the spotlight shone so brightly off Hart's polished head. In the NWA for about half-a-year, Muta is already regarded as one of the federation's leading wrestlers. His acrobatic, gym-

(Continued on page 56)

From the time he started wrestling, Barry Windham has wanted only one thing: anonymity. But the WWF was not the place to go to escape the maddening crowd and now, as "The Widowmaker," Windham has some decisions to make

By Bill Apter

FROM A DRESSING room monitor, Barry Windham watched impassively as the crowd streamed into the Philadelphia Spectrum. By match time, the collective lung power of nearly 20,000 howling fans would cheer their favorites and condemn the rulebreakers who try to undermine them.

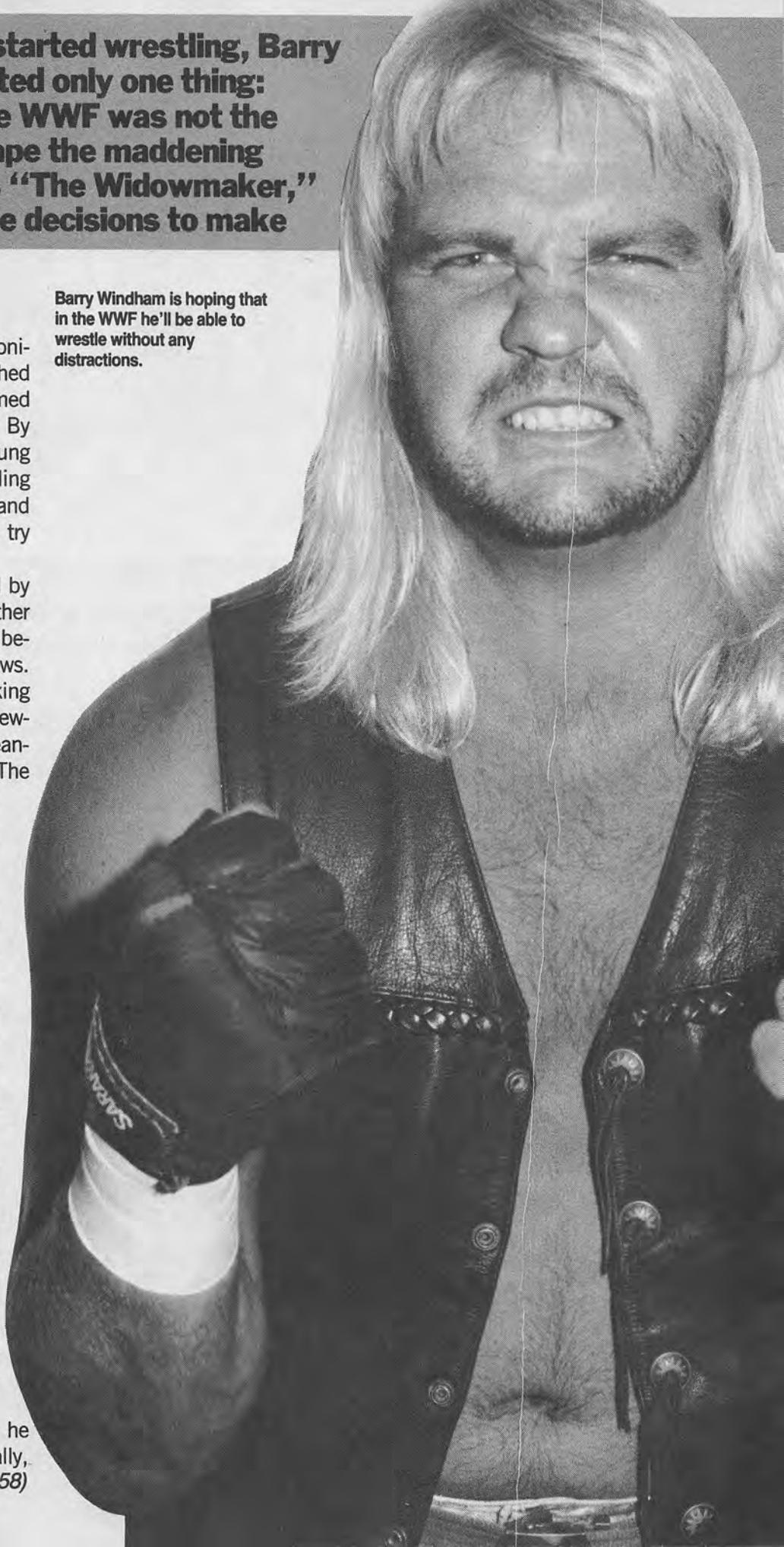
Several wrestlers are unnerved by the big crowd; veterans of other federations have never wrestled before a crowd this size and it shows. They fidgit by their lockers, making forced conversation, silently reviewing their match strategy. Meanwhile, Barry Windham, "The Widowmaker," bored with the monitor, cracks open a cold apple juice and reclines on a dressing room sofa.

He has been through this before—the uncontrolled frenzied hype, the glaring lights, massive crowds, electric atmosphere—and he is no longer affected. He's just waiting to get into the ring and carve another notch in a belt full of notches. The Widowmaker just wants another victim.

Where did Windham first get introduced to the limelight? Did it begin center stage five years ago at WrestleMania I? Or was it as part of The Four Horsemen that he got his first real taste of stardom? Or was he born into it by virtue of his place at the Mulligan family breakfast table?

Since he first made it clear he wanted to wrestle professionally,

Barry Windham is hoping that in the WWF he'll be able to wrestle without any distractions.

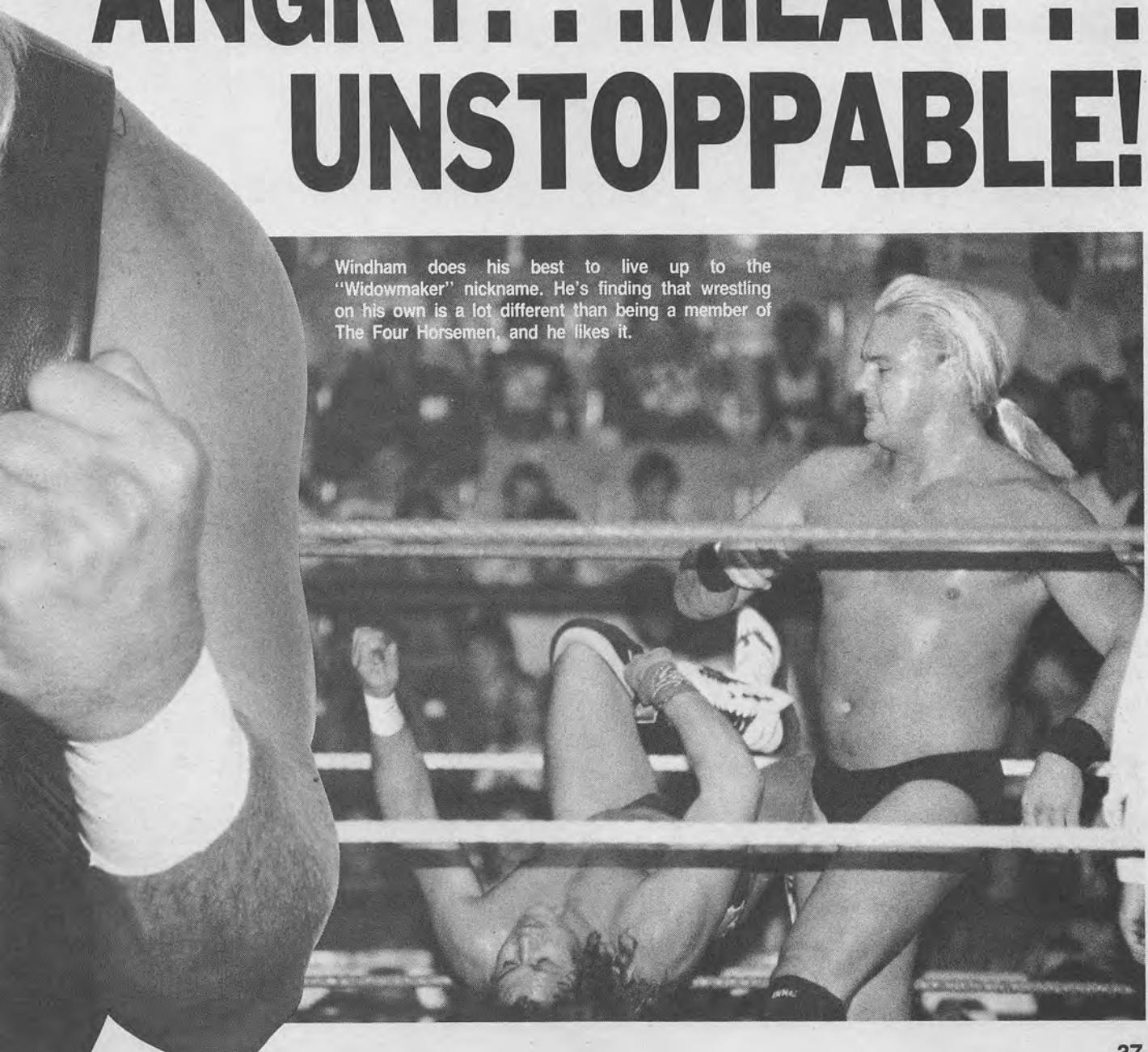


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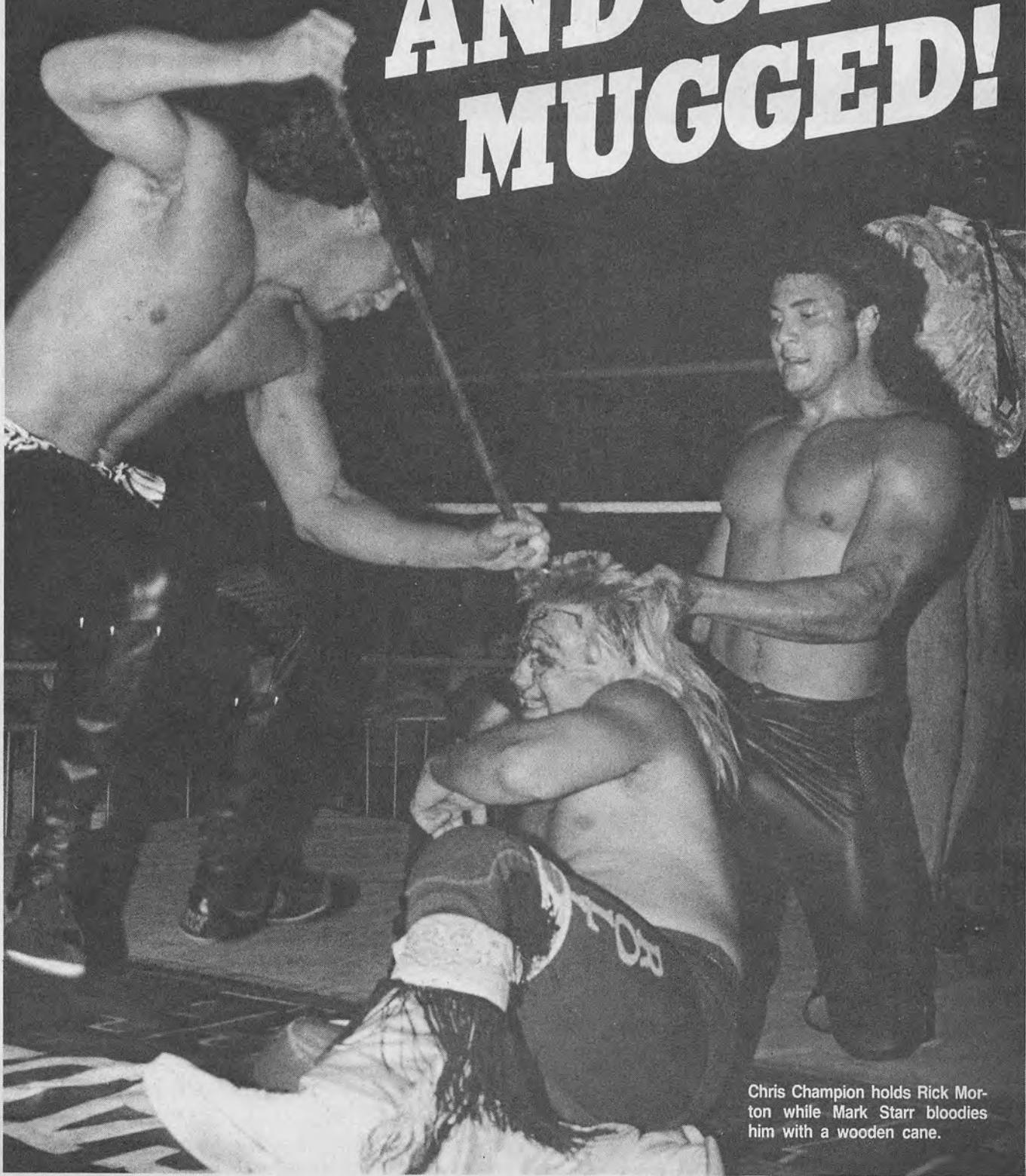
“Widowmaker”

Barry Windham: ANGRY...MEAN... UNSTOPPABLE!

Windham does his best to live up to the “Widowmaker” nickname. He’s finding that wrestling on his own is a lot different than being a member of The Four Horsemen, and he likes it.



**The R&R Express Takes
A Walk On The Wildside. . .
AND GETS
MUGGED!**



Chris Champion holds Rick Morton while Mark Starr bloodies him with a wooden cane.



When Rick Morton returned to the CWA, he had no idea that he'd soon be reunited with Robert Gibson, his longtime partner in The Rock 'n' Roll Express. But this reunion was forced by attacks by Wildside, a team that will go to any lengths to prove itself in this sport

By Bob Smith

FOR MONTHS, THEIR fans waited patiently for them. The Rock 'n' Roll Express, Rick Morton and Robert Gibson, were still quite visible on the wrestling scene, but this time as singles in different territories. At the same time, their supporters were praying that they hadn't seen the last of their favorite team.

But now, even the most loyal Express fans are sorry that Morton and Gibson decided to get back together.

They can thank Wildside for that.

"Hey, we didn't get to be CWA tag team champions for nothing," boasted Chris Champion, who has joined forces with Mark Starr to form one of the most promising—and brutal—young duos in the sport. "Those old-timers, Morton and Gibson, came into town thinking they could just strip the belts right off us, but they're finding out we're the hottest thing

Memphis has seen in years. Now, just beating 'em won't be good enough for us. Only after we've crippled them will we be happy that we've gotten the job done right."

In reality, it was Wildside that forced Morton and Gibson to reform their partnership. Morton returned to the CWA during June, anxious to reestablish himself in the federation where he got his start.

"There's never been any trouble between me and Robbie," recalled Morton. "We just decided that being apart was the best thing for us, and it really seemed to be working out just fine. I was doing great here, and Robbie was winning all his matches in the ACW. But when we split up, we made a pact that we would always be there for each other if we ever got in trouble. Unfortunately, I had to call on Gibby a lot sooner than I expected."



Starr holds Robert Gibson for Champion's flying assault (far left). Starr kicks Gibson in the lower back (above) and whips him across the ring (below).



It was during August that Morton realized he needed his long-time partner back by his side. He entered a 21-man battle royal to be televised on *CWA Championship Wrestling*, and did exceptionally well in the match, emerging



Champion makes a cover on Gibson. Wildside is eager to prove themselves against a veteran team like The Rock 'n' Roll Express, but Morton and Gibson are just as determined to vanquish their youthful opponents.

as one of the last four men remaining in the ring. The other three, however, turned out to be Champion, Starr, and young Doug Gilbert. For Wildside, it was their first attempt to try to put Morton out of action.

"I've always hated The Rock 'n' Roll Express," spit Champion, who wrestled in the NWA with Sean Royal as The New Breed at the same time the Express was at its championship peak. "They never gave me and Sean the title shots we deserved a couple of years ago. Now, me and Mark rule the roost around here, and we decided that some payback for little Ricky was long overdue."

The three rulebreakers pounded on Morton unmercifully for several minutes, and only the bell signaling the expiration of TV time saved Morton from serious injury. When it was announced that the battle royal would resume at the beginning of the following week's program, Morton immediately placed a call to Gibson, who was wrestling in Alabama.

"I knew I was in big danger," Morton recalled. "All through the

first part of that battle royal, Starr and Champion kept threatening to break my arms and legs, and with both of them and Gilbert against me, there was a good chance they could do it. Thankfully, Robbie agreed to come to Memphis the next week in case those guys got any ideas about trying to put me out. Hey, I'm a damn fine wrestler, but there's no way I can beat three tough guys at once."

That phone call turned out to be one of the best investments Morton ever made. When the battle royal resumed, Morton quickly ousted Gilbert from the ring, but then was hammered in the face repeatedly by Starr and Champion, who opened a bloody gash across his forehead. Incredibly, Morton managed to hurl Starr over the top rope, but Starr retaliated by bringing a chair into the ring. The rulebreakers continued to rough up Morton until Gibson, armed with a plank, charged to the ring and ran the rulebreakers out of the studio.

"What complete cowards!" screamed Starr in the locker room afterward, holding his head in pain from being hit by the board. "Since when does a supposed star like him need to hit people over the head with a piece of wood? Those old fogies have real-

ly done it this time. We're gonna pay 'em back, and we're gonna do it when they least expect it. Those two has-beens better not relax for a minute, 'cause we've just begun our mission of devastation, daddy."

Starr and Champion made good on their threat on August 7 at the Mid-South Coliseum in Memphis. Gibson and Morton wrestled the team of Iceman Parsons and Brickhouse Brown to a draw, after which Champion and Starr stormed the ring. Wildside ravaged the Express for minutes, leaving them bloody and battered in the ring. The vicious attack was tantamount to a brutal mugging, and it established Wildside as Morton and Gibson's most hated enemies in years.

"That's exactly what we want," laughed Champion. "We've been CWA champions for months, but people have been too slow in getting on the Wildside bandwagon. So now we wanna show the world that we're gonna be the dominant tag team of the '90s, and the best way to do it is to rub out the established teams. Everybody around here says the Express are a couple of legends, right? Well, we've beaten the stuffings out of 'em twice. So who's the legends now?"

Thus far, Wildside has managed to do what few teams have ever been able to do—decimate The Rock 'n' Roll Express. But in doing so, they've drawn the wrath of one of the most accomplished tag teams of modern times. Both Morton and Gibson insist the *real* war has yet to begin.

"Let's see what happens in a *real* match," said Gibson, still recovering from his injuries. "These bums have proven to be real good at getting to us when we're not looking, but just wait and see what happens when we meet 'em face to face. I'll bet Wildside won't be quite so wild once we get through with 'em." □

THIS MONTH IN...

Wrestling '89



Find out what sets **HULK HOGAN** apart!



You're privy to a new era of wrestling with our exclusive coverage of **CHRIS VON ERICH** training for his pro debut!

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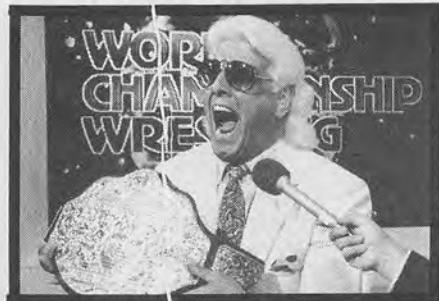
All this and much more . . .
in the Winter 1989 issue of
Wrestling 89

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in the December 1989 issue of
Inside Wrestling

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BEYOND THE SQUARED CIRCLE

▲ Butch Miller of The Bushwhackers lets the fans pat his head. He thinks it brings him good luck.



▲ Scotty the Body is behind bars, but it's for a good cause, a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society.



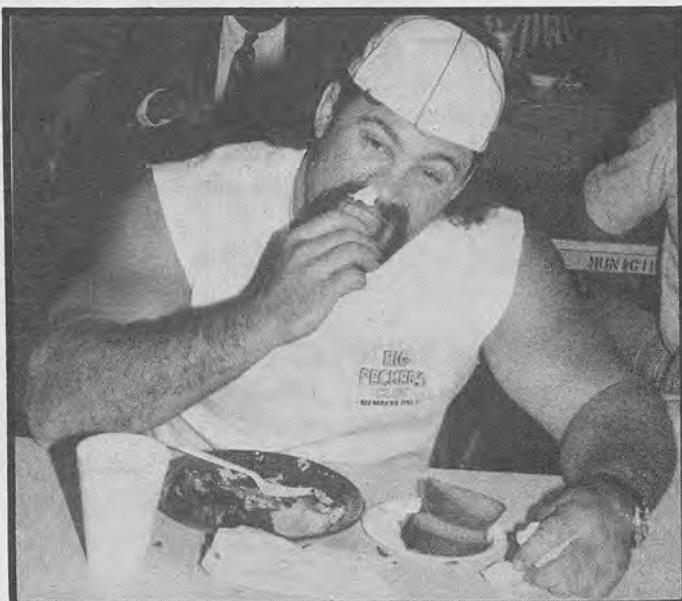
▲ Tully Blanchard is looking dapper and riding in style since becoming a WWF tag team champion with Arn Anderson.



▲ Joel Goodheart, host of a wrestling call-in show in Philadelphia, presents Ric Flair with a specially made championship belt.



▲ Associate Editor Andy Rodriguez argues with Teddy Long over a column he wrote about the devious manager. Rodriguez bailed out before The Skyscrapers got a hold of him.



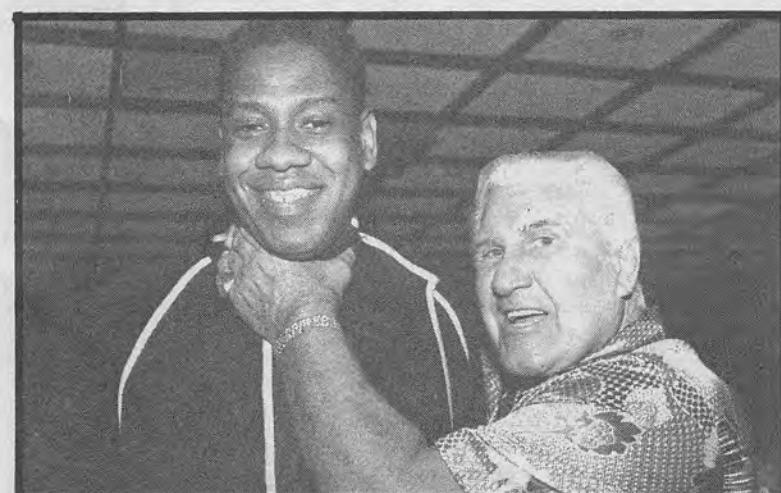
▲ Rick Steiner chows down (not on dog food!) before a recent match. He needs all the fuel he can get to keep up with his brother, Scott, and his girlfriend, Robin Green.



▲ Stan Lane and Jim Cornette get a warm greeting from some aspiring actresses who are inspired by *The Midnight Express*.



▲ AWA announcer Larry Nelson went south of the border for this Mexican sombrero. He should use it to catch all the bull Larry Zbyszko throws at him.



▲ Fred Blassie may have retired from managing, but he still thinks anybody who doesn't agree with him is a "pencil-necked geek."

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 7)

Things will only seem right in the NWA when "The Dragon" returns. Then he'll recapture that World championship and hold it for a much longer time. C'mon, Rick, get back in there!

THOMAS HAYES
Greenville, SC

DON'T MESS WITH LEX

I have a question for Brian Donohue, the guy you featured in "Introducing" (September 1989). Donohue, where do you get off say-

greats in the sport. He has victories over Brickhouse Brown, Dick Slater, and Chris Adams.

Being the WWA champion should give George a higher priority for a shot at Larry Zbyszko's AWA title than wet-behind-the-ear wrestlers like Tom Zenk or Scott Norton.

SHELBY LAMBERT
Edmond, OK

EMBRY MUST STAY

Eddie Ellner must be crazy when he suggests that Eric Embry be

banned from World Class ("A Quick Fix For World Class Madness: Ban Eric Embry!" October 1989). Embry has saved World Class from the evil doings of Gen. Skandor Akbar time and time again. Ellner thinks that all Embry is doing is stirring up trouble, but as usual he is wrong.

This sport needs more men like Embry. Eric is popular because the people realize that he'll do anything for his friends. And his friends do anything for him: Remember how Percy Pringle started a petition to get



U.S. champion Lex Luger would destroy a rookie wrestler like Brian Donohue, writes Todd Hill, who was not impressed with our "Introducing" feature on Donohue.

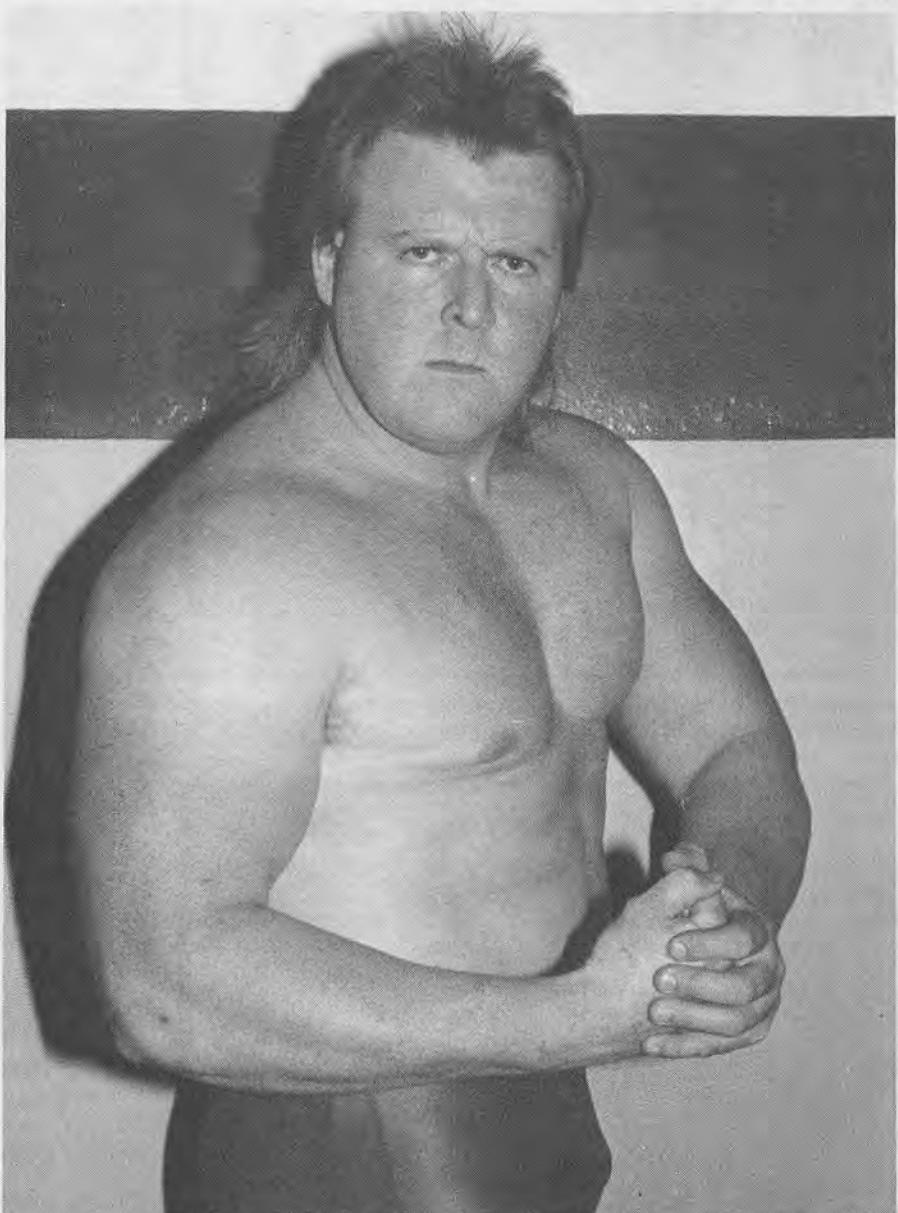
ing you're better than guys you've never wrestled—especially Lex Luger? I'd suggest you either shut your mouth or have someone like Lex shut it for you.

I was very excited by what Lex did to Rick Steamboat. I can't wait for the "Total Package" to take his proper place at the top of the NWA.

TODD HILL
Hillsboro, OR

LET GEORGE DO IT

WWA champion Mike George may be the most underrated wrestler in the AWA, as well as the sport. He may look like a slouch, but the man can wrestle, he can brawl, and he can go the distance with some of the



Eric Embry has complete control over Gen. Skandor Akbar. Reader Cary San Gabriel scoffs at Eddie Ellner's suggestion that Embry should be banned from World Class.

Eric reinstated after he lost that loser-leave-town match to Gary Young? They were inspired by Eric's courage and didn't want to see Akbar have the last laugh.

CARY SAN GABRIEL
Houston

SCIENTIFIC WONDERS

"Mr. Perfect," Curt Hennig, and the "Million-Dollar Man," Ted DiBiase, are constantly being put down by the majority of fans. Both men represent the scientific side of wrestling, which we are seeing less of these days.



Ted DiBiase slams Hercules. In reader Kevin Kimble's opinion, DiBiase's scientific skills would be better appreciated in the NWA.

Hennig and DiBiase are definitely the best all-around scientific and tactical wrestlers in the WWF. They're very similar in style; they both pick a body part to work on until the inevitable pin.

These two scientific wonders should finish their contracts with the WWF, then go to the NWA, where their skills can give them the United States and World championships. Whether you like or despise them, respect their winning ability.

KEVIN KIMBLE
Brookhaven, MS

PAY THE PIPER

Your story on Roddy Piper in the September 1989 issue ("Roddy Piper Is Back—I'm Addicted To Wrestling!") was very interesting. The idea of "Rowdy" Roddy coming out of retirement is exciting, especially since he quit wrestling at the height of his career. However, I believe that Piper is merely testing himself out with his recent matches in the WWF and Pacific Northwest area.

I don't believe Roddy would return full-time for anything less than a shot at Hulk Hogan or Ric Flair. Piper has defeated Flair in the past and gave Hogan some of the champion's toughest matches during his first title reign. Winning a world title had to have been his one big unfilled desire.

MIKE FACCIANI
Johnstown, PA □

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CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 16)

al maneuvers and countermoves with neither man ever gaining a decisive advantage. When Muta missed a backflip elbowsmash, Sting put him in a scorpion leg-lock. But Gary Hart quickly interfered, getting Muta disqualified and leaving the title in limbo.

In other matches: Ric Flair pinned Terry Funk ... The Freebirds beat The Midnight Express ... Lex Luger defeated Tommy Rich ... Mike Rotundo pinned Scott Hall ... Sting also defeated Ron Simmons.

Dallas, TX (Correspondent—Jake Irvine): The big match on this card pitted Kerry Von Erich against the mysterious Taras Bulba. Kerry was about to put the claw on Bulba, but Bulba kicked him in the stomach. Then Bulba slapped the claw on Kerry.

For about three minutes, Kerry fought the claw in vain. Shockingly, he was pinned. There was blood gushing from his forehead, and Kerry might have been hurt even worse, but Eric Embry, Jimmy Jack Funk, Matt Borne, and Percy Pringle saved him from further punishment. Kerry had to be carried off on a stretcher.

In other bouts: Jimmy Jack Funk defeated Sheik Braddock ... Matt Borne & Billy Travis beat Al Perez & Gary Young ... Eric Embry defeated Cactus Jack ... Chris Adams and P.Y. Chu-Hi went to a no-contest ... Billy Travis won the Thunderdome match.

Rochester, MN (Correspondent—Paul Shubert): There has been a lot of bad blood between AWA World champion Larry Zbyszko and Sgt. Slaughter since the challenger's first shot at the belt several months ago.

For this bout there were two referees: Gary DeRusha in the



Sting slumps in the corner as Muta connects with a vicious chop to his left pectoral. Unfortunately, due to Gary Hart's later interference, the NWA TV title was still held up.



Larry Zbyszko is expert at concealing his illegal tactics, and that talent has helped him keep the AWA title from Sgt. Slaughter.

ring and Tom Burton on the ring apron. After some furious action, the Sarge put Zbyszko in the cobra clutch, but Zbyszko was able to escape.

Later on, after DeRusha was knocked down, Zbyszko pulled out a foreign object. He was just about to use it when the Sarge wrestled it away from him. During all this, Burton was in the ring attending to DeRusha. Finally, Burton saw Slaughter with the

weapon and disqualified him immediately.

In other bouts: Paul Diamond and Col. DeBeers were both disqualified ... Wendi Richter pinned Judy Martin ... Kokina defeated Butler Stevens ... The Russian Brute beat Jerry Lind ... Mike Enos, Wayne Bloom, & Johnny Valiant defeated Russian Brute, Derrick Dukes, & Tommy Jammer.

Knoxville, TN (Correspondent—Charles Karnes): In the match pitting Wendell Cooley against RPM Mike Davis, Davis had the advantage throughout the match by kicking and punching. Finally, Cooley had had enough of Davis' tactics and mounted an illegal attack of his own. Cooley pinned Davis with a bulldog.

In other bouts: Todd Morton defeated Keith Heart ... Terrance Garvin beat Adrian Street ... Miss Linda and The Lady Beast wrestled to a no-contest ... Dennis Condrey beat Dan Davis ... Steve Armstrong, Tracy Smothers, & Jerry Stubbs defeated Jimmy Golden, Brian Lee, & Robert Fuller by countout. □

YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 18)



Lex Luger allows the crowd to distract him just as he takes a swing at Michael Hayes. The "Total Package" has inspired anger in the fans because of his arrogance toward them. Luger insists they've never had anything to do with his success.

A: "Yes," Luger replied, "but at what price? Just a few weeks after Barry Windham and I won the tag belts in 1988, Windham turned against me and joined the Horsemen. Earlier this year I got my revenge on Windham by regaining the U.S. belt. Having fans or being popular had nothing to do with that victory. I have finally learned that the only way to get ahead in this sport is to follow your own path and damn the consequences. I intend to dominate this sport in the 1990s and beyond. It doesn't matter if I'm cheered or not."

Q: "I have a question for Dustin Rhodes: Do you think your dad, Dusty Rhodes, made a wise or foolish move when he returned to the WWF?"—Darrell Stewart, Teiford, NS



Dustin Rhodes, currently in the CWA, fully supports Dusty Rhodes' move to the WWF.

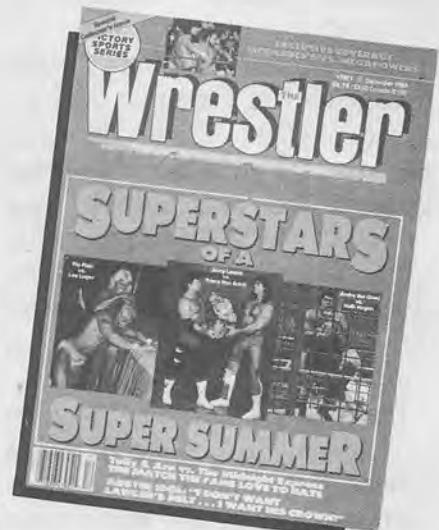
A: "Dad did what he thought was best for him at this time in his career," Dustin answered. "I support him 100 percent. Apparently, he felt there was nothing left for him to accomplish in Florida, so he decided to take the WWF offer. He's only been there for a few months, but the fans have really taken to him, haven't they? I'll always be proud of Dad whatever he does. And maybe someday we'll tag up and kick some butt."

* * *

Q: "My question is for Davey Boy Smith: I can't believe The Dynamite Kid's reaction to your auto accident. Why don't you get Chris Benoit, Ricky Rice, and Bruce Hart to put Dynamite out of commission so you can concentrate on regaining the North American title from Larry Cameron?"—Faron Muncey, Prince George, BC

A: "Hold on there!" Davey Boy exclaimed. "If anybody's gonna take care of Dynamite it's gonna be me. There are a lot of friends like you mentioned who are willing to help me and that's good, but Dynamite was my partner and it's my responsibility to set him straight again. I'll take care of Cameron and that North American belt soon enough. My first priority is, though, is blasting Dynamite." □

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 8)

destroyed **Koko B. Ware** . . . **Demolition** and **Hacksaw Duggan** defeated **Akeem**, **Big Bossman**, and **Andre the Giant** . . . **Greg Valentine** defeated **Hercules** . . . **Ted DiBiase** downed **Jimmy Snuka** by countout.

Savage rebounded from his disheartening loss just three days later in Portland, Maine. He again used Sherri's purse to pin **Hacksaw Duggan** and become the new "king" of the WWF. Later in the card, **Savage** and Sherri were coronated as king and queen of the federation in a lavish ceremony.

Eric Embry is still burning hot in the USWA. He defeated **Cactus Jack** in 12 seconds in a loser-leaves-town match in Dallas—which came only a week after beating massive **P.Y. Chu-Hi** for the Texas title in only nine seconds . . . On the same card, **Kerry Von Erich** suffered one of the most shocking losses of his career when he was pinned by newcomer **Taras Bulba**. **Bulba** used a brain claw similar to **Von Erich's** to score the victory. **Bulba**, a huge Mongolian, kept the claw locked on **Von Erich** for several minutes, opening a huge gash on the Texan's forehead. **Von Erich** was carried off on a stretcher after the bout.

"This is the first step toward regaining control of the USWA," boasted **Skandor Akbar**, **Bulba's** manager. "I may have lost my stock in this federation, but I can still control it by having Devastation Inc. cripple every opponent they get their hands on. Today, **Von Erich**—tomorrow, **Embry**!"

It looks like woman trouble may be brewing in the NWA as **Robin Green** recently underwent a startling transformation. The formerly frumpy girlfriend of **Rick Steiner** has suddenly become a raving beauty who looks suspiciously like **Fallen Angel**, the former valet of



Chavo Guerrero collars Jose Estrada. The high-flying Mexican star has signed with the NWA to wrestle in Texas.



Rick Steiner sits at ringside with his girlfriend Robin Green, who has undergone a startling transformation: She's now a raving beauty. Missy Hyatt, Steiner's manager, is suspicious.

Kevin Sullivan. **Green** now accompanies **Rick** and **Scott Steiner** to the ring—but so does **Missy Hyatt**, the duo's manager.

"I'm happy as long as **Rick's** happy," **Hyatt** insists, but thus far both women have obviously kept their distance from one another.

Could a war between these two femme fatales be in the offing?

Chavo Guerrero has signed with the NWA for several dates in Texas . . . **Kendall Windham** returned to the ICW as a fan favorite, but turned against **Joe Savoldi** at the end of a battle royal in Lewiston, Maine . . . **Bobby and Jackie Fulton** have entered the AWA as **The New Fantastics** . . . **Ron Garvin** was reinstated as a wrestler by WWF President **Jack Tunney**, and the former NWA World champion has set his sights on gaining revenge from **Greg Valentine**, the man who defeated him in a "retirement" match early this year.

Speaking of retirement bouts, manager **Ronald Gossett** is fuming in the CWA. He's incensed that a masked newcomer by the name of **Texas Dirt** is competing in Memphis. Dirt looks quite a bit like veteran **Dutch Mantel**, who previously had lost a loser-leave-town match to huge **Master of Pain**, a Gossett protege.

"I just can't believe that snake promoter **Eddie Marlin** would allow such an obvious ploy to go on right under his nose," griped the rotund Gossett. "Mantel may think he's being pretty funny, but I've instructed Pain to unmask him and get him out of Memphis once and for all. This area's not big enough for both me and Mantel!"

Terrence M. Garvin, also known as **Beauty**, continues to upset fans in the Continental area. He now has a **Lady Beast** that accompanies him and the "original" **Beast** to the ring. He also took on **Adrian Street** and his valet, **Miss Linda**, in a steel cage match where the male Beast broke Linda's arm.

"We're just getting started, too," cooed the effeminate Garvin. "Street and Linda have got to be the tackiest things we've ever seen. Now the three of us are going to prove who's got the most style in the CWF, darlings."

That's what's happening. See you at the matches! □

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TEDDY LONG

(Continued from page 31)

mistake). Long's previous experience was as a referee, an occupation far removed from the responsibilities of building and managing a stable of wrestlers.

So, through the years, Long noted the success of The Road Warriors and realized that they were two huge, powerful men. He failed to realize, however, that Hawk and Animal grew up under similar conditions and were naturals for each other. Spivey and Vicious are similar in physique, but they are not similar men.

In fact, they are dangerously dissimilar. Vicious is young and idealistic. He strives to be great and will accept nothing less. Spivey has been a winner in wrestling. He's also been a loser and realizes that occasional compromises must be made. But he is hungry to reach the top, too, and doesn't have the patience to deal with a young partner that's prone to mistakes and unrealistically stubborn.

They are, in fact, a tag team doomed for disaster. There is little chance of Vicious and Spivey staying together much longer. They are a product of Long's ignorance and inexperience.

The Skyscrapers must separate before it's too late. And Long must make the first move.

"When I first formed The Skyscrapers, it was only because Theodore asked me to," revealed Gary Hart, the original manager of Spivey and Vicious. "We struck a deal and Theodore was still under contract to referee, so he couldn't very well form a team. But I was against it from the start. I didn't think Vicious and Spivey belonged together. Their similarities were too obvious. Their differences are more subtle and more important."

Hart has tried to make Long's initiation as a manager less difficult. Unfortunately, he hasn't been able to talk Long into breaking up



Sid Vicious chokes Scott Hall on the ropes. Mat observers were surprised when Vicious became part of a tag team, because he didn't seem like the type who would submerge his goals in favor of a team's.

the team. In fact, Hart has decided to let nature take its course with The Skyscrapers. "The only way to learn is by experiencing," Hart said. "This will help Theodore in the future, and I don't think anybody will get hurt."

But already there have been signs of trouble between The Skyscrapers. At the July 23 Great American Bash in Baltimore, Spivey and Vicious were the final men remaining in a \$50,000 two-ring battle royal. Instead of battling for the pot, Long insisted that the partners split the money. Both agreed, but Vicious didn't seem happy about sharing the glory, even with his partner.

Recently, prior to a tag team

match, Vicious and Spivey nearly came to blows over who would start. Imagine teammates arguing over such a trivial matter. It's absolutely ludicrous. In all likelihood, Vicious and Spivey had several other disagreements that built up to this one incident. If so, their future is dimmer than previously thought.

"Not so," insisted Long, who refused to further discuss the rumors of dissension in his stable. But Long's denials cannot mask the truth: The Skyscrapers are a team embroiled in turmoil and short on time. Even more tragically, Long is sacrificing both men's careers by keeping them together.

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sport. He has been praised by such stars as Kerry Von Erich, Ric Flair, and Lex Luger. But he is at an important stage of his professional development; any backward movement now could be permanent. So far, he has made all of the correct moves. His decision to wrestle for a short time in Japan was brilliant. He learned a new style of wrestling and also was forced to deal with the rigors of international travel. Vicious was a huge hit in Japan.

Spivey, on the other hand, has already experienced several career turns. At one time, he was compared to Hulk Hogan. Now it looks like he'll never achieve what Hogan has, both in terms of professional success and popular appeal. But not everybody can be Hulk Hogan. Spivey still has time to be extremely successful on his own, without the unfair comparisons.

The time has come, however, for Spivey to make a move. He has sadly underachieved since his ring debut in 1983. On a recent trip to Japan, Spivey proved that he still has what it takes to be a top pro. Unfortunately, teaming with Vicious and following the directions of an inexperienced, selfish manager such as Long is not the way for Spivey to achieve his ultimate goal.

Spivey and Vicious do not belong in a tag team—not with each other and not with another partner. They are cut out for singles wrestling, as most huge wrestlers usually are (even Hawk and Animal have been successful individually). Neither man will ever be willing to sacrifice personal glory for the good of a team. It is not in their makeup.

Long, however, continues to try where he has no chance of succeeding. The Skyscrapers certainly look awesome in the ring and can overpower just about any other team.

But wrestling is built on its subtleties. Tag teams are built on chemistry. The time has come for Teddy Long to try again. The Skyscrapers are doomed.

WIN, LOSE, OR DRAW

(Continued from page 10)

"You may insist you're the same wrestler wherever you go," I told Perez, "but there's no doubt in my mind that you're meaner and a lot more aggressive in the USWA (the Texas-based federation) than you are in Florida."

"That's your opinion, pal," Perez answered, "but you're dead wrong. I think your view is distorted because in Texas I'm fighting guys you would call the fan favorites and who I call pansies. Maybe they can't take the punishment as well as the nastier guys. Naw, I'm hard-nosed and relentless *all* the time."

"It's almost like you care more in Texas, like there's something driving you," I persisted with my point. "Any truth in that?"

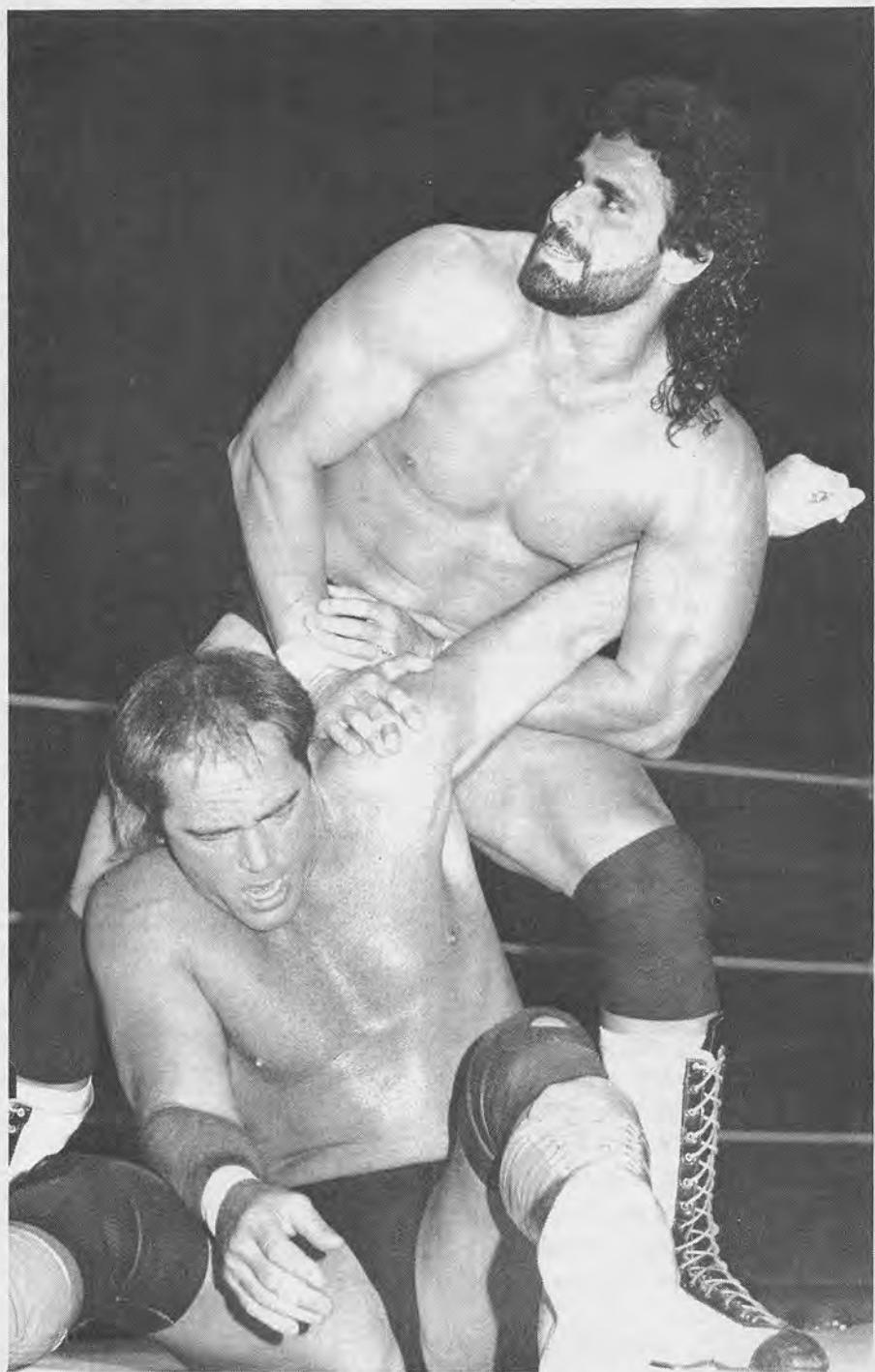
This time, Perez didn't shoot off a hasty reply. He took a minute or so to think about it, rubbing his chin and staring at a painting on the wall behind me. Then he answered.

"You have to remember," the words came slowly, "in Texas I have Skandor in my corner. He's quite an incentive, let me tell you. He's a veteran and a master of motivation. He's a lot like Gary Hart in that he's a serious student of the human mind."

"It's funny, I can sit here and explain this to you, yet Skandor exercises the same sort of ..." Perez paused to search for the right word. "The same sort of control over me. I hate to say 'control,' but that's what it is. We all like to think we act independently, but that's not always the case, especially in this crazy sport. A lot of guys totally give themselves over to their managers. I won't name names, but you can probably guess who they are."

I thanked Perez for being so candid, but he shrugged me off.

"Some important people—a lot



of them my friends—aren't gonna like what I just said, but it's all true," he said quietly. "You've been in a lot of locker rooms; you can see for yourself. So if you're looking for some sort of explanation about me, there it is."

"This is something you've had on your mind for quite a while, isn't it?" I asked.

"It's why I asked you down here," he answered. "I don't want

Perez' match against Steve Keirn in Florida was scientific from start to finish, and the fans truly appreciated it.

any misunderstandings about who Al Perez is or what he stands for. I might have told you some things I didn't plan on saying, but that's okay. Now you know where I'm coming from."

I do know where Al Perez is coming from. And I understand this sport a little bit better now. □

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ANDRE VS. WARRIOR

(Continued from page 33)

The Streak. Defenders of the Giant quickly pointed out how Andre was tired by the endless hype and publicity leading up to the match. He wasn't himself, they claim. Still, Hogan defeated Andre consistently around the WWF circuit. While it ended Andre's aura of invincibility, the Giant was still a feared and dangerous opponent.

Now, after his fifth consecutive loss to the Warrior—all under a minute—fans and reporters clamored for explanations.

One they won't accept is the sudden elevation of The Ultimate Warrior. "No doubt Warrior has improved," said one fan, "but there has to be some other reason to explain his indomitability. No one beats Andre on a regular basis in under a minute. That's simply insane."

Make no mistake: Every part of the Warrior's game has improved since, wrestling as The Dingo Warrior, he held the World Class Texas title. Warrior legitimized his claim as the WWF's best wrestler by conquering Rick Rude at SummerSlam '89 for a second Intercontinental championship. But even he is at a loss to explain his success against Andre.

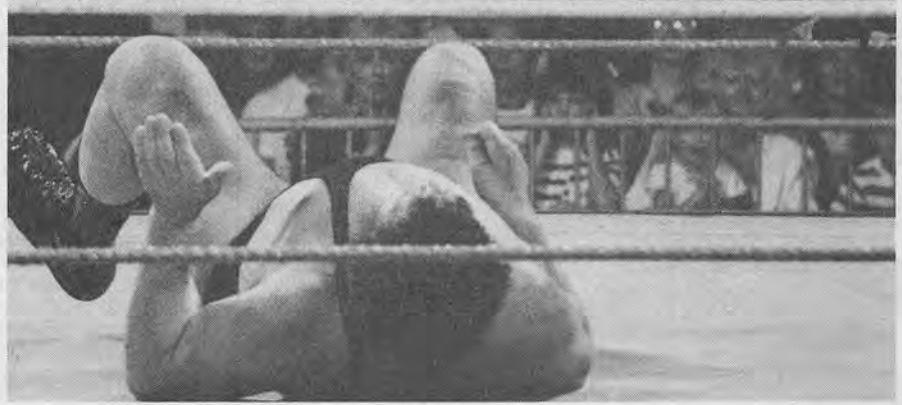
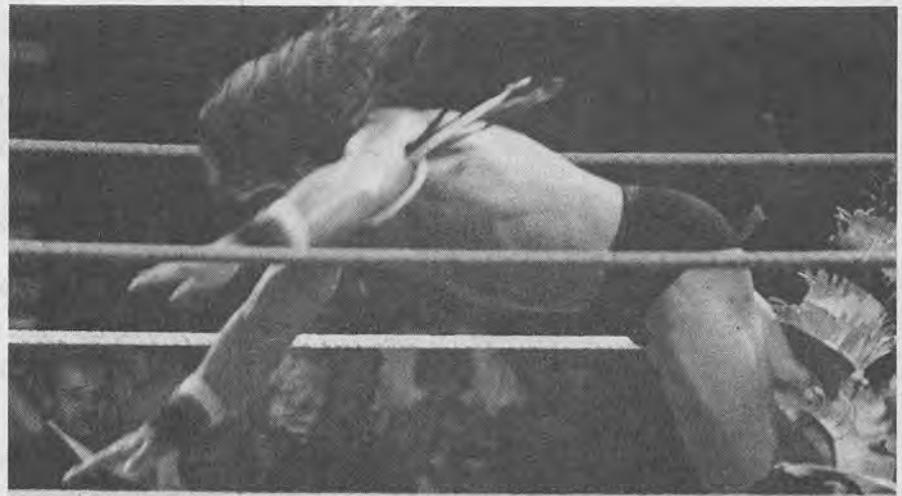
"Warrior won't talk about it to reporters," a source close to him says. "He's a little embarrassed by it. No one likes to see legends crash and burn. But wrestling is a strange sport, and these things just happen from time to time."

The "Ultimate just has his number" theory has gained momentum with each passing win. "In every sport, there are matchups that appear equal on paper but on the field become really lopsided," said one wrestling analyst. "Nolan Ryan struck out Claudell

Washington 36 times out of 100 at bats. Ryan's a great pitcher, granted, but Washington is a lifetime .300 hitter. On paper, that's an even matchup, so who can figure?"

Warrior's combination of power and speed are precisely the weapons Andre has difficulty in

combating. Against a slower-moving Hogan, Andre was able to preserve his fading strength and lash out at the right moments. The same strategy worked against Big John Studd. Warrior is relentless in the ring: a whirling dervish of movement and activity. Remember his 31-second victory



The Warrior leaps on the massive Giant (top right) and scores the pin (right). Andre's size hasn't helped him against the Warrior's sudden onslaught.

over Honky Tonk Man for his first I-C title. Warrior likes to attack at the bell, before his opponent has time to adjust to his swarming style. It's a strategy that has worked to perfection against Andre.

The other, more plausible, explanation focuses on Andre's slow and steady loss of motor skills. "I see nothing at all surprising in this series," says *The Wrestler* Associate Editor Eddie Ellner. "It's been years since Andre could be regarded as a professional. He is an overweight, lumbering, pathetic freak. It's amazing he's lasted this long. Warrior is doing the sport a favor by showing how incompetent the Giant Idiot really is."

The visible erosion of Andre's skills has given rise to another possible explanation: Andre is concealing a debilitating injury that's affected his abilities. It is this theory that enjoys the most support among the WWF wrestlers.

"That's not Andre the Giant out there," says one grappler. "The man you see losing all these quick matches is in pain but not telling anyone. Something is the matter with Andre, but so far he ain't talking."

Indeed, at different points in his matches, Andre grimaces as if injured, but gamely refuses to capitulate to its painful source. For the last 18 months, ringside physicians have speculated Andre is suffering from an internal disorder that affects his strength, stamina, and coordination.

Perhaps it's simply the years of brutal pounding, of wrestling hurt, of being a constant target for every newcomer, and the pressure of maintaining The Streak that have finally affected Andre's ability to compete. Perhaps it's time for the Giant to take some time off. Perhaps it's time for Andre to retire to his luxurious French chateau and squash grapes instead of people. He's earned the rest. □

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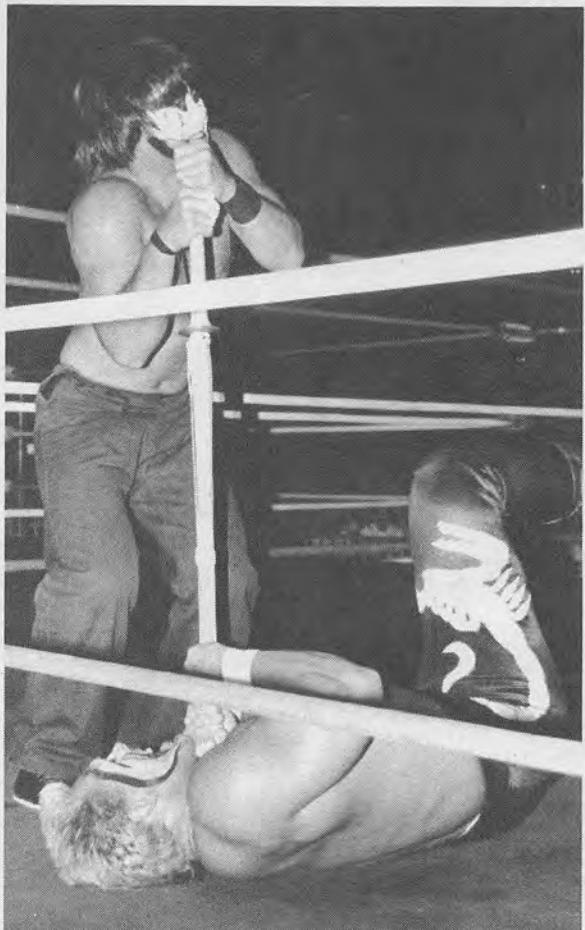
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MUTA VS. STING

(Continued from page 35)



Muta rams a kendo stick into Sting's throat (left) and throws him at the ringpost (above). Muta says Sting stands for all that's wrong with America.

nastic, and scientific skills exploded on the American wrestling scene and already influenced the styles of dozens of other wrestlers—including, would you believe it, Sting.

"There is no question Muta has had a profound effect on many of the wrestlers here," Sting said. "I'm not ashamed to admit I've incorporated one of his moves into my repertoire."



Muta makes the cover on Sting. Hart says there's no question that Muta is superior to Sting in every way, but Sting says there's no way Muta can outwrestle him.

This last statement elicits guffaws of incredulity from Gary Hart. "The day Sting could perform the simplest, most elementary of Muta's moves is the day I grow a ponytail. Muta would gladly share his secrets with other wrestlers. It doesn't matter if these imposters know how to execute his complex maneuvers. They are simply unequipped physically to do so. Muta's natural abilities, combined with my dazzling grasp of renegade American tactics, will propel this great Japanese competitor to the heights of his profession."

Translated, this means that Hart will teach Muta how to cheat and rulebreak, components the talented young wrestler could easily succeed without. Though Muta recently assisted in Terry Funk's postmatch attack on Ric Flair, it is not the NWA champion he has his sights on. Sting, the epitome of the Ugly American, is number one on

his hit list.

"Sting represents everything that is wrong with America," Hart explains. "Sting is a slick pretty boy trying to portray himself as a dedicated worker." Or as Muta less succinctly phrased it, "I rock and roll Sting to death."

In their battle at the Baltimore Bash for the NWA TV title, however, it was Sting who put a hurting on Muta, while managing a few good shots at Hart as well. The controversial ending saw Muta pinned, though a review of the tape appeared to show a shoulder raised off the mat. Sting's pinfall was negated and the title, at press time, remained in limbo. The result has left both Hart and Muta infuriated.

"Americans steal me," Muta muttered. "Sting die. I die Sting." Hart came to his charge's linguistic rescue by promising, "Sting will pay dearly for his disrespect. The Son of Kabuki does not suffer fools gladly. Muta is descended from a long line of shogun warriors. He will not rest until Sting is declawed, boiled, and sauteed. Soon, we will introduce a new Japanese delicacy to American shores: scorpion sushi dipped in mascara sauce. Sting, beware. You have aroused the ire of The Great Muta. He will not rest until you are permanently injured."

Sting's second workout begins with a brisk three-mile run around an old high school track, followed by an excruciating set of calisthenics. "It's really a shame it has to be like this," he says in between one-handed pushups. "In another time, Muta and I could have been great friends. We have a lot in common. But as long as there is wrestling, there will be weak, pencil-pushing loudmouths like Gary Hart to get in the way. When I'm through teaching Muta a few lessons, maybe I'll send baldy on a slow boat to Japan. It sure will clean the air around here."

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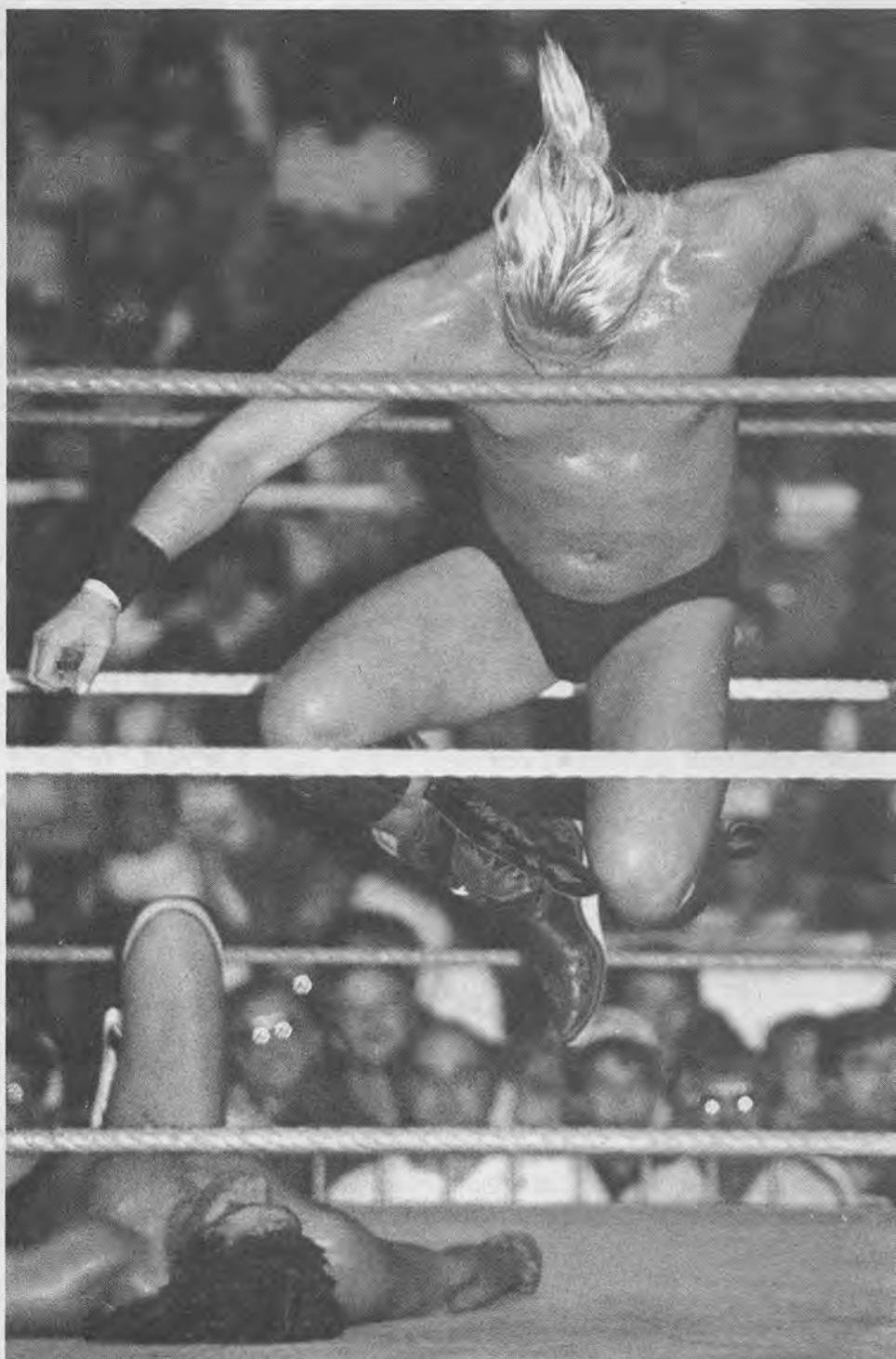
(Continued from page 37)

fame has been an unwelcome part of Barry Windham's caravan. He changed his name, for cryin' out loud, to Windham to avoid his father's unavoidable spotlight. He wound up in New York and became part of the groundswell that catapulted pro wrestling from a popular regional sport to an international conglomerate. At WrestleMania I in 1985, his tag team title match with Mike Rotundo was viewed by an estimated one million viewers around the world.

He is a reluctant superstar. He never sought fame and controversy; he just wanted to wrestle. Inevitable questions hound him everywhere he goes: Does he think he's better than his father? Is there family tension because of the name change? What about his brother's career? Is it true his brother holds him responsible for ripping the family apart? Is he a fan favorite or a rulebreaker? Is he hot or cold? Wet or dry? In or out? *Ahhhhhhhhh!!*

The Widowmaker trashes the apple juice and lies down on a mat for a series of prematch stretches. Wrestlers, mostly of the rule-breaking fraternity of which Windham now belongs, come in and out, grunting acknowledgements that he ignores. After 10 years in the fishbowl, Windham has finally achieved the anonymity that's eluded him in the past, and he is grateful. He is the Maker of Widows, according to the WWF marketing geniuses, and no one has ever been happier with a nickname. Each night on his way to the ring, Windham takes the new name out for a walk, rolls it over his tongue to see how it tastes. It always tastes sweet.

That his career has come to this has made Barry Windham an angry young man. Though one might be deceived by the long blond hair, the bright, open face, and flashy cowboy boots, it is important to realize Barry Windham is not in the



Windham's brutality has not waned since joining the WWF. Throughout his career, Windham has shared the spotlight with others: his father, his brother, tag team partners, the Horsemen. In the WWF, he's attempting to carve out a niche for himself only.

least flamboyant. His talent is riveting, his personality isn't. He changed his name to avoid association with his famous father, who liked to crack open heads and then tell the world about it.

Windham was bit by the wres-

tling bug while studying at West Texas State. While the questions of where to train and how to break into the ranks are the problems facing most aspiring professionals, Windham's dilemmas were far more complex. The basic problems

were no problems for him: With his father's connections, Windham would have a clear path to the ring. The real problem was he didn't want Big Daddy to know.

"I must have been around 10 or 12 when Barry and Pop had their first real fight," Kendall Windham recalls. "It got worse every day until Barry left home."

Windham could change his name and leave his father (they later reconciled), but he couldn't escape his father's gene pool. It wasn't long before Windham was being touted as a superstar prospect. "He had barely been wrestling six months before magazines started saying he was better than Blackjack," Kendall says. "He'd be wrestling in some small hick town, but there'd be two, three dozen reporters there to cover the match. He hated the notoriety."

Some men are born to obscurity, their deeds distinguished by anonymity. Every move Barry Windham made seemed to find itself into the papers. It got so bad that Windham joined The Four Horsemen to escape the spotlight.

"He reasoned that if he surrounded himself with wrestlers who craved the publicity, he might get lost in the shuffle as a sort of silent Horseman," Kendall said. Instead, Windham found himself a spokesman for the Horsemen line of merchandise. "It's made him bitter and very angry," Kendall says. "My brother just wants to wrestle."

Tonight, Windham's anger is translated into sheer grappling fury. To cries of "Widowmaker! Widowmaker!" Windham pins him in under four minutes. Already, there is talk of title shots against Hulk Hogan, a possibility that would inevitably lift the curtain on Windham's private life. After all these years, would he risk exposing himself, even for a shot at the WWF title?

The Widowmaker isn't talking, but we think we know the answer.

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INTRODUCING

(Continued from page 20)



Norton puts a side headlock on Wayne Bloom. Norton is so tough that he recently took on both Bloom and Mike Enos—The Destruction Crew—at the same time.

1986 in Las Vegas. Norton boasts a 60-inch chest and 23-inch biceps, and his arms are so powerful that he's won major tournaments with both his left and right hands!

"To me, arm-wrestling is the easiest thing in the world," said Norton. "Since my upper body is so big, there aren't many opponents who can even begin to give me a hard time. That's why I decided to get into pro wrestling. I needed to find a sport with other guys who can really test my strength, and becoming a pro was the kind of challenge I crave. What good is being big and

strong without having a chance to show it off?"

Growing up in Minneapolis, Norton was a lifelong fan of Verne Gagne, the nine-time AWA World champion. When he decided to try to become a professional wrestler last year, he immediately contacted the retired star. When Gagne first met Norton last year, the legendary star couldn't believe his eyes.

"I hadn't seen a man so naturally big since Andre the Giant," said Gagne. "From the moment we met, I knew I had to train him to become a wrestler. It was obvious that Scott could be a great

one, since he's also surprisingly agile for his size. I realized I was looking at a man who could dominate this sport the same way he ruled over the arm-wrestling tables."

After several months of grueling workouts at Gagne's training camp in Minneapolis, Norton made his professional debut on April 15 in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. His opponent was rugged Wayne Bloom, a member of The Destruction Crew with Mike Enos, and he managed to wrestle the rulebreaker to a hard-fought 15-minute draw. Little did he realize at the time that his first match would immediately propel him into a heated feud.

"I never had to go through anything like that before," recalled Norton with a laugh. "Bloom was really well-conditioned, but he's the most vicious guy I've ever seen. All he tried to do was hurt me in any way he could, and his partner kept trying to get me when I wasn't looking. They're big, strong men, but they're also cowards. Now, I bet I could beat them both at once."

Amazingly, Norton tried to do just that. In an incredible effort, Norton took on both Bloom and Enos in a handicap match on July 8 in Rochester, Minnesota. Norton won on a disqualification when both Crew members double-teamed him, but he wasn't happy with the result.

"Those guys claim they're the best tag team in the AWA, but I know I could crush 'em both," insists Norton. "I've defeated some of the strongest men in the world on the arm-wrestling table, so those two should be a piece of cake. I hope they get their wish and win the AWA World tag team title. Then I can be the first wrestler in history to win both of those belts all by himself!"

NINTENDO CRAZE CONTINUES!

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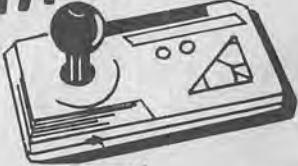
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Wrestler

TOP 10

1 HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA
WWF World champion

2 RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN
NWA World champion

3 LEX LUGER
268, Chicago, IL
U.S. heavyweight champion

4 THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
280, Queens, NY
WWF Intercontinental champion

5 STING
260, Venice Beach, CA
No. 1 contender: NWA TV title

6 RANDY SAVAGE
245, Sarasota, FL
No. 2 contender: WWF title

7 JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
USWA champion

8 LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA
AWA World champion

9 THE GREAT MUTA
245, Tokyo, Japan
No. 4 contender: NWA title

10 LARRY CAMERON
280, Chicago, IL
Stampede North American champion



Mike Enos & Wayne Bloom

TAG TEAMS

1 TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON
Combined weight: 484 pounds
WWF World tag team champions

2 MICHAEL HAYES & JIM GARVIN
Combined weight: 490 pounds
NWA World tag team champions

3 THE ROAD WARRIORS
Combined weight: 567 pounds
No. 1 contenders: NWA tag team title

4 DEMOLITION
Combined weight: 585 pounds
No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title

5 SAMOAN SWAT TEAM
Combined weight: 510 pounds
No. 2 contenders: NWA tag team title

6 THE BUSHWHACKERS
Combined weight: 542 pounds
No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title

7 THE HART FOUNDATION
Combined weight: 515 pounds
No. 3 contenders: WWF tag team title

8 THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS
Combined weight: 458 pounds
No. 3 contenders: NWA tag team title

9 MIKE ENOS & WAYNE BLOOM
Combined weight: 518 pounds
No. 1 contenders: AWA tag team title

10 MARK STARR & CHRIS CHAMPION
Combined weight: 468 pounds
CWA tag team champions

NWA

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN

1—LEX LUGER
268, Chicago, IL

2—TERRY FUNK
247, Amarillo, TX

3—STING
260, Venice Beach, CA

4—THE GREAT MUTA
245, Tokyo, Japan

5—TOMMY RICH
248, Hendersonville, TN

6—STEVE WILLIAMS
265, Norman, OK

7—MIKE ROTUNDO
245, Syracuse, NY

8—RICK STEINER
248, Detroit, MI

9—BRIAN PILLMAN
226, Cincinnati, OH

10—SID VICIOUS
319, West Memphis, AK

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA

1—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
280, Queens, NY

2—RANDY SAVAGE
245, Sarasota, FL

3—RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN

4—BRUTUS BEEFCAKE
273, San Francisco, CA

5—DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX

6—HACKSAW DUGGAN
280, Glens Falls, NY

7—JIMMY SNUKA
250, Fiji Islands

8—CURT HENNIG
235, Minneapolis, MN

9—TED DIBIASE
247, Omaha, NB

10—GREG VALENTINE
243, Seattle, WA

AWA

World Champion:
LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA

1—GREG GAGNE
220, Robbinsdale, MN

2—SGT. SLAUGHTER
310, Parris Island, SC

3—ADNAN AL-KAISSE
235, Iraq

4—AKIO SATO
234, Tokyo, Japan

5—JONNIE STEWART
242, Pacific Palisades, CA

6—PAUL DIAMOND
230, Thunder Bay, Ontario

7—DERRICK DUKES
235, Boston, MA

8—BARON VON RASCHKE
271, W. Berlin, Germany

9—KEN PATERA
256, Portland, OR

10—THE RUSSIAN BRUTE
285, Moscow, Russia

USWA

USWA Champion:
JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN

1—ERIC EMBRY
225, Lexington, KY

2—P.Y. CHU-HI
257, Jackson, TN

3—KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX

4—CHRIS ADAMS
228, Stratford, England

5—MIL MASCARAS
245, Mexico City, Mexico

6—AL PEREZ
238, Tampa, FL

7—JEFF JARRETT
200, Hendersonville, TN

8—SHEIK BRADDOCK
244, Dallas, TX

9—JIMMY JACK FUNK
243, Portland, OR

10—MATT BORNE
235, Portland, OR

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

MOST POPULAR

1	HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA	
Last month: No. 1 Most Popular	
2	RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN	
Last month: No. 3 Most Popular	
3	THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR
280, Queens, NY	
Last month: No. 5 Most Popular	
4	STING
260, Venice Beach, CA	
Last month: No. 2 Most Popular	
5	BRUTUS BEEFCAKE
273, San Francisco, CA	
Last month: No. 4 Most Popular	
6	DUSTY RHODES
302, Austin, TX	
Last month: No. 6 Most Popular	
7	RICK STEINER
248, Detroit, MI	
Last month: No. 8 Most Popular	
8	RODDY PIPER
231, Glasgow, Scotland	
Last month: unrated	
9	HACKSAW DUGGAN
280, Glens Falls, NY	
Last month: No. 7 Most Popular	
10	ERIC EMBRY
225, Lexington, KY	
Last month: No. 9 Most Popular	

MOST HATED

1	TERRY FUNK
247, Amarillo, TX	
Last month: No. 1 Most Hated	
2	RANDY SAVAGE
245, Sarasota, FL	
Last month: No. 2 Most Hated	
3	RICK RUDE
246, Robbinsdale, MN	
Last month: No. 4 Most Hated	
4	LEX LUGER
268, Chicago, IL	
Last month: No. 5 Most Hated	
5	THE GREAT MUTA
245, Tokyo, Japan	
Last month: No. 6 Most Hated	
6	ANDRE THE GIANT
497, Grenoble, France	
Last month: unrated	
7	LARRY ZBYSZKO
248, Pittsburgh, PA	
Last month: No. 7 Most Hated	
8	ZEUS
343, Los Angeles, CA	
Last month: No. 3 Most Hated	
9	JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN	
Last month: No. 9 Most Hated	
10	DENNIS CONDRAY
256, Marietta, GA	
Last month: No. 10 Most Hated	

For period ended September 1, 1989

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1 — RANDY SAVAGE	81 points
2 — HULK HOGAN	78 points
3 — LEX LUGER	69 points
4 — RIC FLAIR	68 points
5 — RICK STEAMBOAT	51 points

TAG TEAMS

1 — THE ROAD WARRIORS	92 points
2 — DEMOLITION	90 points
3 — SAMOAN SWAT TEAM	53 points
4 — TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON ..	40 points
5 — STAN LANE & BOBBY EATON	38 points

STAMPEDE

North American Champion:

LARRY CAMERON

280, Chicago, IL

1 — GAMA SINGH
220, Karachi, Pakistan
2 — CHRIS BENOIT
218, Edmonton, Alberta
3 — JOHNNY SMITH
235, Manchester, England
4 — DYNAMITE KID
228, Manchester, England
5 — BRUCE HART
211, Calgary, Alberta
6 — JONATHAN HOLLIDAY
232, Pemberton, NJ
7 — ANGEL OF DEATH
310, Los Angeles, CA
8 — LEN CRAZY HORSE
220, LaRonge, Saskatchewan
9 — STEVE RAY
227, Kansas City, KS
10 — BEEF WELLINGTON
225, Lloydminster, Alberta

CWA

CWA Champion:

BLACK BART

261, Pampa, TX

1 — JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN
2 — DUSTIN RHODES
254, Austin, TX
3 — JEFF JARRETT
200, Hendersonville, TN
4 — KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX
5 — TEXAS DIRT
224, parts unknown
6 — BILL DUNDEE
228, Manchester, England
7 — RICK MORTON
228, Memphis, TN
8 — DIRTY WHITE BOY
235, Bucksport, TN
9 — BILLY TRAVIS
218, Houston, TX
10 — COUSIN JUNIOR
240, Mud Lick, KY

ACW: ACW champion—Colt Steel; 1—Ken Shamrock; 2—Nelson Royal; 3—Todd Champion; 4—Spike; 5—Samoan Tai; 6—Sheinobi; 7—Tommy Angel; 8—Ricky Nelson; 9—David Isley; 10—Tommy Seabolt.

CWF: Continental champion—Dennis Condrey; 1—Wendell Cooley; 2—Dan Davis; 3—Adrian Street; 4—Terrance M. Garvin; 5—Mike Davis; 6—Alan Martin; 7—Jerry Stubbs; 8—Todd Morton; 9—Tom Prichard; 10—Don Harris.

FCW: FCW champion—Steve Keirn; 1—Ho Chi Win; 2—Kendall Windham; 3—Comrade Busick; 4—Mike Awesome; 5—Al Perez; 6—Jim Backlund; 7—Brett Sawyer; 8—Italian Stallion; 9—Frankie Lancaster; 10—Dennis Knight.

ICW: ICW champion—Tony Atlas; 1—Joe Savoldi; 2—Kendall Windham; 3—Vic Steamboat; 4—Ken Patera; 5—Mike Sharpe; 6—Ivan Putski; 7—Col. DeBeers; 8—Tom Brandi; 9—Scott Putski; 10—Mike Kahlua.

PNW: PNW champion—title vacant; 1—The Grappler; 2—Carl Styles; 3—Art Barr; 4—Bill Francis; 5—Rip Oliver; 6—Scotty the Body; 7—Steve Doll; 8—Nord the Barbarian; 9—Rex King; 10—Al Madril;

WWC: WWC champion—Steve Strong; 1—Carlos Colon; 2—Ivan Koloff; 3—TNT; 4—Invader I; 5—Jim Valiant; 6—Abdullah the Butcher; 7—Original TNT; 8—White Angel; 9—Kareem Muhammad; 10—Rip Rogers.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating nearly 200 wrestlers in 18 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.



Eric Embry

Out with the old ... and in with the new. As of August 4, World Class Championship Wrestling no longer exists. It's now known as the United States Wrestling Association, thanks to the efforts of Eric Embry. That night, Embry (representing Max Andrews and the USWA) and P.Y. Chu-Hi (representing Gen. Skandor Akbar & Tojo Yamamoto) battled for controlling interest in World Class stock. Embry won. So, if you take a look at our ratings pages, you'll see USWA where World Class used to be.

Tracking Trends. Very, very briefly: The Ultimate Warrior won the Intercontinental title from Rick Rude at SummerSlam '89 and moves into the four spot. Rude drops out ... Rick Steamboat has left the NWA ... The Great Muta enters at number nine ... Stampede North American champ Larry Cameron has become an impact player in Alberta.

On the tag team side, The Road Warriors move into number three, above Demolition ... The Hart Foundation is ready to make a run at the WWF World tag belts.



The Road Warriors

Double your fun ... with Most Popular and Most Hated tag teams. The policy at *The Wrestler* concerning our Most Popular and Most Hated ratings is to not split tag teams. Therefore, you'll never see Hawk or Animal in the Most Popular ratings unless they wrestle on their own. Conversely, Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson aren't in our Most Hated ratings because they only wrestle as a team.

But we realize that fans hate and love tag teams as much as they do the singles wrestlers. So, with that in mind, we've compiled top five Most Popular and Most Hated ratings. A brief analysis follows.

MOST POPULAR TAG TEAMS

- 1—THE ROAD WARRIORS
- 2—DEMOLITION
- 3—THE BUSHWHACKERS
- 4—THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS
- 5—THE ROCKERS

MOST HATED TAG TEAMS

- 1—TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON
- 2—MICHAEL HAYES & JIM GARVIN
- 3—SAMOAN SWAT TEAM
- 4—MIKE ENOS & WAYNE BLOOM
- 5—JIMMY GOLDEN & BRIAN LEE

Analysis. Most Popular: It doesn't matter what The Road Warriors do. They generate incredible excitement whether as rulebreakers or fan favorites ... Demolition, once criticized for being Road Warrior imitations, have carved their own niche in the tag team picture. Ax and Smash are, in fact, very different from the Warriors and the fans have recognized this ... It's hard to believe that Butch Miller and Luke Williams—The Bushwhackers—have gained so much popularity. As The Sheepherders, there were few teams hated more ... Bobby Eaton and Stan Lane—a.k.a. The Midnight Express—are basically riding manager Jim Cornette's wave of popularity ... Shawn Michaels and Marty Jannetty—The Rockers—have gained a legion of fans with their exciting, high-flying style.

Most Hated: Not much has changed since Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson went to the WWF. They're still one of the greatest tag teams in the world. And they're still the most hated ... Michael Hayes and Jim Garvin—a.k.a. The Freebirds—are devious outlaws who lust for violence and money ... Samoan Swat Team will stop at nothing to win matches and anger fans ... Mike Enos and Wayne Bloom could be popular if not for manager Johnny Valiant (and their penchant for crippling fan favorites) ... Continental tag champs Jimmy Golden and Brian Lee have shown absolute disregard for the rules and the fans.

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